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THE LARGER PARISH PLAN

BY

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Larger Parish Principles

Town and country realize their interdependence and co-operate in securing for each other equal social, economic, and religious privileges.

Communities, neighborhoods, and churches pool their resources so that together they can obtain a ministry, program, and equipment which no one of them might get alone.

People of different races and creeds associate together in a religious fellowship where churches include all and exclude none, and subordinate doctrinal tests to those of Christian discipleship.

Ministers and peoples formulate and administer plans and programs by means of a Larger Parish Council composed of delegates representing every co-operating neighborhood and church.

A multiple ministry of trained specialists with a departmental work seek to discover, mobilize, train and use local leadership.

Service is rendered over areas as well as churches reaching out with a maximum effort to minister to every person living in the open country.

Selfish interests are forgotten and churches co-operate in putting first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness over the entire countryside.

M. D.

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I. COMMUNITY AND PARISH

THEORY and practice in rural religion and country church work win confidence and a following as they are sociologically sound and in harmony with movements and trends observable in country life. A new method of procedure called the Larger Parish Plan is unique because it resorts to history and research for its ideas of community and parish.

The ancient "agricultural community," which finds its best illustration in the early Saxon village of England, had a very important characteristic. Villager and farmer lived together. The latter individual trekked out daily from the center to cultivate his scattered strips of land. The practice still persists in France, Germany, and other countries with important psychological and sociological results. Habits of thinking, acting, and working together are fostered by such communal living. Co-operation becomes spontaneous and natural, demanding no outside promotion or promoters. Antagonisms between villager and farmer do not arise where both live together in the intimate practice and association of a common community.

The decay of this unique village life wrought havoc in England. It began with feudalism and the manorial system and brought about the results pictured in Goldsmith's "Deserted Village." America profited by the tragedy. Sturdy yeomen of the soil who had been dispossessed of their ancestral holdings emigrated from their mother country and founded colonial New England. They came in search of homes as well as freedom of opportunity. And it was only natural that they should bring with them their old world village models and their habits of collective living. The New England "town," with its parish "Meeting House" and village-farmer inhabitants, was in many ways a reproduction of the ancient agricultural village community.

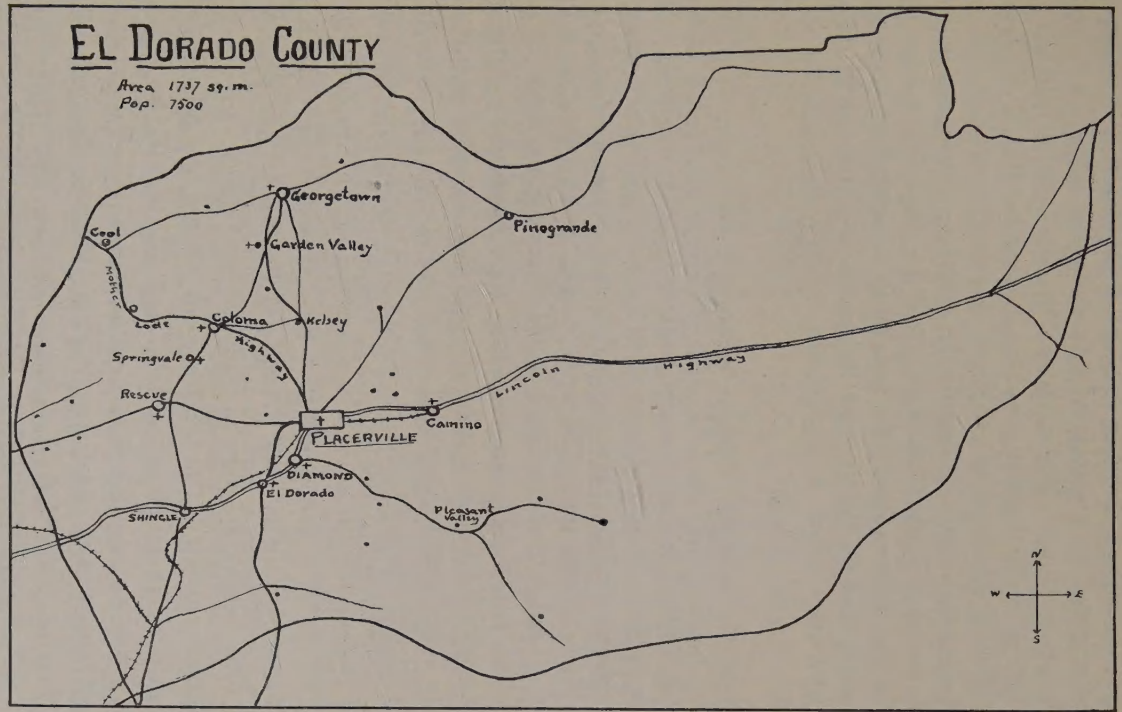
The New Englander migrated westward subduing the forests and opening up the vast prairie regions of America. Settlement according to the familiar town system was impossible. The growth of an unplanned and somewhat hap-hazard civilization was also inevitable. The United States disposed of its limitless "free lands" recklessly. It marked them off by the surveyor's chain according to "the checker board system" into sections, half-sections, and quarter-sections. No thought was given to intelligent colonizing. The sacrifice of nearness and practice of community became part of the price of pioneering. Everything conspired to produce the "loneliness and hardship of the farm task."

As the new western empire was brought under cultivation there came into being a peculiarly American type of village very unlike its English and European prototype. The American village has always been a business institution and trade center, and not agricultural. It became more and more a

well-to-do farmer's convenience, and multiplied in proportion to settlement, land values, farm improvements, and worth of crops. But unfortunately this village did not include the farmer, and he has been termed "a man without a community." Conditions became worse as villages grew in size. Many of them incorporated so as to obtain city privileges and powers, and came to feel that they belonged to the urban rather than to the rural order. The farmer's trade did much to make village institutions and conveniences possible. The villager, however, did not think his contribution sufficiently compelling to require the weaving of the farmer himself into the social and managerial practice of village life. Suspicion and enmity resulted because the farmer and villager were unconscious of the fact that they were really members of a community to which both should be equally loyal.

The American farmer's apparent lack of community has interested sociologists during recent years. They have engaged in a great deal of research to find out if there was not some "actual community" in which the relationships of the villager and farmer were at least somewhat akin to those enjoyed by the inhabitants of the ancient agricultural village. Careful studies have demonstrated that there is such a community. The American village depends upon an easily ascertainable area of land, and every farmstead has its own business center. Villager and farmer possess common interests within the "trade zone," and should be equally loyal to this "rediscovered community." When such mutual obligations are recognized and felt, it is more than possible that habits of thinking, acting, and working together will be developed. Co-operation may even become spontaneous and natural, and the American countryside will acquire sociological and psychological characteristics which have thus far been foreign to its experience and traditions.

The Larger Parish comes into the picture at this stage of rural development, and in somewhat logical sequence. For its primary aim is to promote the practice of a community which will include both villager and farmer. It is supremely interested in religion, but also concerned about social and economic welfare. It would make "parish" co-extensive with the trade-area, which would in turn help to remedy two great weaknesses of Protestantism. The latter has never had a theory of parish based upon a study of the area to which the church should minister, and has always been thought of in terms of constituencies rather than of available populations. Over-churching and over-looking have resulted. The Larger Parish is itself a religious co-operative which brings villager and farmer together in the task of serving an entire area of inhabited land. Every household on "the town's land foundation" becomes a part of a definite parish responsibility. Town and country are given equal consideration by a service which seeks to bring all that believe together.



EL DORADO FEDERATED CHURCH

California

El Dorado County Parish
Approximately 500 sq. m.
Population 5700

II. THE LARGER PARISH PLAN

THE Larger Parish Plan specializes in a ministry over areas as well as churches, and is dominated by a felt obligation to serve all people who dwell thereon. The practice is not altogether new. Aggressive ministers have used the plan without troubling to give it a name. It is in reality the old circuit rider system rejuvenated, brought up to date, given a new equipment, and larger usefulness. The minister who adopts the plan feels a primary obligation to render faithful service to a particular church and people. He is also swayed by an absorbing passion to serve over large areas. He possesses the vision of the foreign missionary who would pre-empt great stretches of country in the name of the Most High. And this minister is not one whit less a preacher and a true man of God because he becomes also a community builder, a local statesman, and "a rural life engineer." He is at all times a co-operator with other ministers and churches.

III. THE NAME

LARGER PARISHES are not standardized in name or method. The name probably originated some fifteen years ago with Harlow S. Mills, of Benzonia, Michigan, and was used to designate an unusual piece of work done by him in that area. The word "larger" rightly described it as a parish unlike the ordinary one, which consisted of merely one center, church, and people. The term Larger Parish seems to have caught the popular and expert imagination because it designates an increasingly accepted and successful method of religio-social church work whose theory and practice coincides with modern ideas of community. It is firmly established in the vocabulary of social and religious specialists. Other names are used in different parts of the country for the same type of effort; e. g., "United Parish," "Regional Parish," "Co-operative Parish," and "Associated Parishes." And prefixes to these names often possess an important psychological intent and content. Larger Parishes must often include neighborhoods, villages, and districts which find it difficult to co-operate because of feuds, jealousies, or rivalries. Something must be done to overcome these local animosities. Appeal must be made to some tradition, pride, and loyalty big enough to make the co-operators forget selfish interests in a larger enthusiasm and community spirit. Many parishes have accomplished this desired end by adopting prefixes which have regional significance; e. g., "The Plateau Valley Larger Parish," "The Little Sioux Co-operative Parish," "The Sandhill United Parish," "The West Florida Associated Parishes."

IV. DEFINITIONS

A LARGER PARISH is a group of churches co-operating together in a common program. It provides an organization and a technique, and may be viewed as an agency for fostering unified church organization and achievement. In principle, the Larger Parish is a piece of organizational machinery developed for the purpose of uniting small and ineffective church units together in a common effort to secure more and better leadership, guidance, and development than the small church can achieve unaided and alone. As a technique, it is a method of unifying more or less homogeneous small church units which are handicapped by lack of vision, leadership, and means. As an agency, it groups churches together for a definite program of work, and according to possibilities of organization and procedure dictated by local conditions. It makes possible a program suited to the needs of the small church and of the co-operating group of churches.

(M. E. Larger Parish Conference).

The Larger Parish is a method of rural church administration. The churches of a country section which are naturally thrown together by topography or by trade relationships are formed into a co-operative association by means of which the whole life of the section is served. Resources in leadership and finances are pooled. A Larger Parish Council, composed of elected representatives from each of the neighborhoods, formulates a program, agrees upon a common budget, and becomes the executive agency. Specialists in modern church leadership are employed to develop their fields of activity in each of the parishes as well as in the big events at the center. The Larger Parish engenders the spiritual unity for which Christ prayed. It manifests a new sense of power in the thought and life of a united people.

(C. C. Haun, Vanderbilt School of Religion, Nashville, Tenn.)

The Larger Parish is a rural parish in which co-operative service is being rendered by two or more churches of the same or different denominations. Such an organization of church work is necessitated by a situation where a single church cannot provide an adequate service over the area for which it is justly responsible. By joining forces with neighboring churches, they can do together what none of them can do alone. The co-operating churches of a Larger Parish assume responsibility for a program of religious work which will serve the many sides of community life. These churches furthermore presume to represent the religious interests of the people of the whole area, and therefore undertake to be representative in methods, in doctrine, and in social adaptation. They make heroic efforts to construct and work toward a far-visioned plan of what they believe to be adequate religious effort in behalf of the communities they serve.

(E. G. Larson, Sandhills Larger Parish, Hyannis, Neb.)

The Larger Parish is one that gives a minister a big enough job to dignify him. It makes possible a specialized ministry by two or three men and a woman working on a common job, but having separate assignments. It satisfies the desire many ministers have to serve a whole community without denominational competition. It permits the development of institutional service which a certain type of minister desires. It makes possible a social program; indeed, it necessitates one. For when the minister, or ministers, serve all the people on an area of land, they are required logically, and, in fact, they are compelled, to serve all the spiritual interests of the people.

(Warren H. Wilson, Presbyterian Board of Home Missions, New York, N. Y.).

The Larger Parish is not identical with the "yoked field." The latter is usually an economic convenience having the pastor's salary, and not the program, in mind. The member churches of a Larger Parish, instead of expecting their own interests to be served, feel a responsibility for the entire group, and realize that all must advance together. It is a new attitude among church groups which does not ask "What do I get?" but "How can I serve?" The attitude is commonly called by the name of Christian.

(Arthur Wilson, Mt. Desert Larger Parish, Seal Harbor, Me.).

The Larger Parish is based upon the idea of several churches under comprehensive and co-operative leadership. Instead of two or three churches on a circuit with an untrained pastor struggling alone, the plan seeks to group several churches under a combined ministry that will be trained to meet the varying needs of all the people in a given territory. A minimum of leadership would be: first, a supervision preacher-pastor who will be responsible for the general program; second, a man who in addition to preaching will care for the young men's and boys' work for the entire field; third, a woman who will have charge of the program of religious education, together with the girls' and children's work. Such a group working together can render service to a larger number of people with a broader program, eliminating duplication, and providing vital elements of a Christian program which are frequently omitted under the present system.

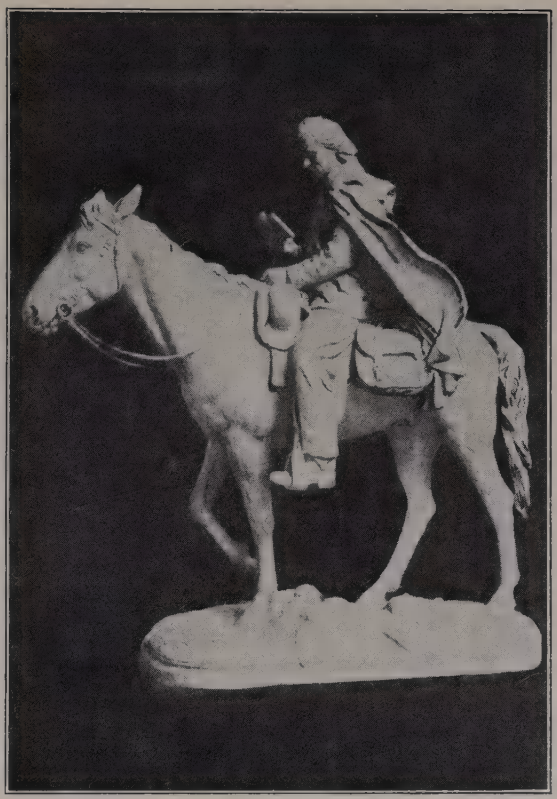
(Mark A. Dawber, M. E. Board of Missions, Philadelphia, Pa.).

The Larger Parish, in the best sense of the term, includes these three principles: a definite area of land to be responsible for; an area of land large enough to require two or more places of worship to adequately meet the needs of the people; and two or more ministers taking joint responsibility to serve these churches in a unified program. We believe that in these five words, "Group Ministry for Group Churches," is contained an adequate though simple definition of this plan.

(Paul F. Holmes, Larger Parish Research, El Dorado, Kansas).

The Larger Parish meets the following needs. It must be recognized that the best training for the rural pastorate is to be found in an assistantship under a competent rural pastor; for a city assistantship is not generally calculated to give either the understanding of, or sympathy for, the farm which a rural congregation is entitled to expect on the part of its pastor. To provide such rural assistantships, the combination of neighboring small parishes with one or more assistants is feasible. It has been successfully employed in several dioceses.

(Father O'Hara, Eugene, Oregon).



The Circuit Rider

V. VARIETIES OF LARGER PARISHES

The Circuit Rider.

With the passing of pioneer conditions went one of the heroic figures of history—the circuit rider. His type of work deserves more than passing mention as perhaps the initial larger parish method of America. Colonial church patterns could not adapt themselves to newer frontier conditions, and only as

religion entered homes and households, was it able to move westward. The circuit rider met a real need as he ranged over vast areas of wilderness parish. He was usually without home or family, and his arduous labors generally put the limit of middle life to his existence. He was continually on the move, and made his "string of appointments" with cabin homes where someone was favorable to religion. He tutored laymen and appointed them to serve the settlements or areas during the long intervals between visits. The circuit rider was more than mere minister. He acted as news carrier, book circulator, teacher, financier, as well as preacher and exhorter. The weakness of the system was its itinerancy and non-resident pastorate. It was largely "a vocal ministry." Nevertheless it provided a heritage which is the forerunner of the present Larger Parish Plan. The circuit rider possessed an indomitable spirit and ceaseless industry. He engaged in a persistent ministry over areas rather than churches. He had a passion for seeking out and ministering to isolated and far separated folks. He rendered devoted service to households, mobilized and trained a non-professional leadership, and considered meeting any human need the work of a true man of God. Such spirit and practice are absolutely essential to successful Larger Parish leadership.

The Yoked Field.

The yoked field is often considered a Larger Parish, but there are important differences between the two. The yoked field is often merely a provisional makeshift used to supplement the salary of a minister whose church cannot pay him a living wage. He takes on one or more "preaching appointments," where services rendered are largely a vocal ministry like that of the circuit rider. A real program is seldom considered, and there is little or no idea of welding a number of churches into a conscious team-play where all will receive the same care and consideration. The Larger Parish, on the other hand, has an ever enlarging program in mind to be promoted by peoples of different churches acting together in a thoroughly co-operative and representative manner. These churches pool their resources so that together they can obtain and support a program of activities comparable to those enjoyed by urban centers. There is little talk about saving money. Additional means and leadership are to be developed and used.

The Demonstration Plan.

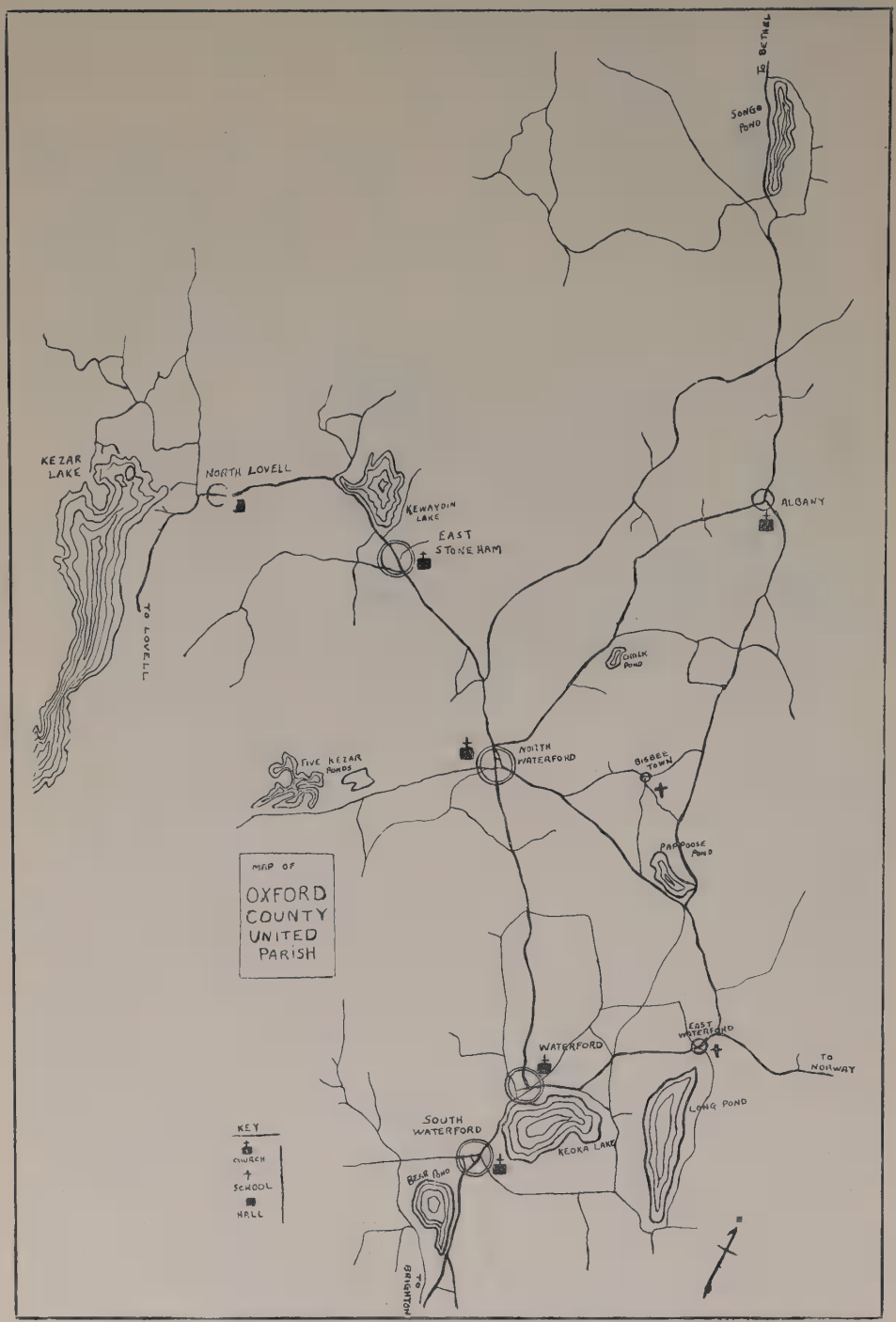
The "demonstration parish" was one of the earliest forms of Larger Parishes. The idea and name were borrowed from the "demonstration farm" method of the Government. According to this latter plan, fields are selected in different parts of the country to be cultivated under instructions received from the United States Bureau of Agriculture. Such "model farms"

are maintained to demonstrate what it is possible to do under different conditions of climate, weather, and soil. The purpose is to induce farmers to bring their farming as nearly as possible to the level of efficiency maintained by the demonstration farm.

The Home Missionary Societies of a number of the denominations took their cue from this way of doing. They have been wont to choose parishes for purposes of experimentation and demonstration. This is generally done on invitation of the people and under formal agreement imposing certain definite obligations upon both parties. The demonstration is usually made for a definite number of years and is subject to revision at the end of that time. The parishes are made "specials," and are helped financially to a greater extent than is the ordinary field. After a thorough survey of the needs and opportunities, the Boards co-operate in supplying an ideal equipment, an adequate personnel, and an ample support. The aim is to demonstrate what a church enterprise can accomplish in a given community and an area when furnished with everything needed for a complete work.

Evangelistic Service Automobile

The demonstration parish is generally promoted over an area in which one denomination has sole possession of the field. Under these favorable conditions, it proves that folks of all sorts can and will unite in religious work and worship. The interdenominational demonstration parish is the better kind. Both are prophetic of a coming day of fewer and better churches, when interdenominational co-operation will completely do away with useless and sinful multiplication of churches in rural communities. Demonstration parishes also show that work of this character and magnitude can get and hold a competent leadership. They form the best kind of argument to induce young men of the right sort to enter the ministry. Another beneficient result may follow the use of demonstration parishes where advancement according to merit is practiced. Ministers will be hopeful that faithful work done on smaller parishes will be rewarded by their being given a chance at the leadership of parishes of the demonstration sort. They will be encouraged to "stay by the stuff" long enough to do a consecutive piece of work worthy of such recognition and advancement.


TO BETHEL
SONGO POND
KEZAR LAKE
NORTH LOVELL
KEWAYDIN LAKE
EAST STONE HAM
ALBANY
TO LOVELL
CHALK POND
FIVE KEZAR PONDS
NORTH WATERFORD
BIGGER TOWN
PAPPOOSE POND
MAP OF
OXFORD COUNTY UNITED PARISH
EAST WATERFORD
WATERFORD
TO NORWAY
LONG POND
SOUTH WATERFORD
KEOKA LAKE
BEAR POND
TO BRIDGTON
KEY
CHURCH
SCHOOL
HALL

The Multiple Ministry Parish.

The Larger Parish which is generally visioned when the term is used, is the one which has resources sufficient to support a multiple ministry and a departmentized work. This sufficiency of resources may be due to unusual financial means within the area, or it may be the result of a persistent education of the people to give. The many, and not the few, provide the support. The departmental leaders are all trained specialists, and are sometimes called ministers of worship, ministers of education, and ministers of parish activities. Each person has a free hand in promoting and developing activities belonging to his department, although he can ask and receive help from other members of the staff whenever there is need. The staff members all preach on Sundays at the numerous out-stations. By means of frequent conference, each one of the parish ministers knows just what the others are doing, so that there is no overlapping or duplication of effort. This most elaborate type of Larger Parish might be considered a demonstration parish, but the field is not chosen for demonstration purposes and does not exist for that end. Size, efficiency, and importance are usually the result of a long period of development. The most noteworthy Larger Parishes usually possess interesting stories of small beginnings.

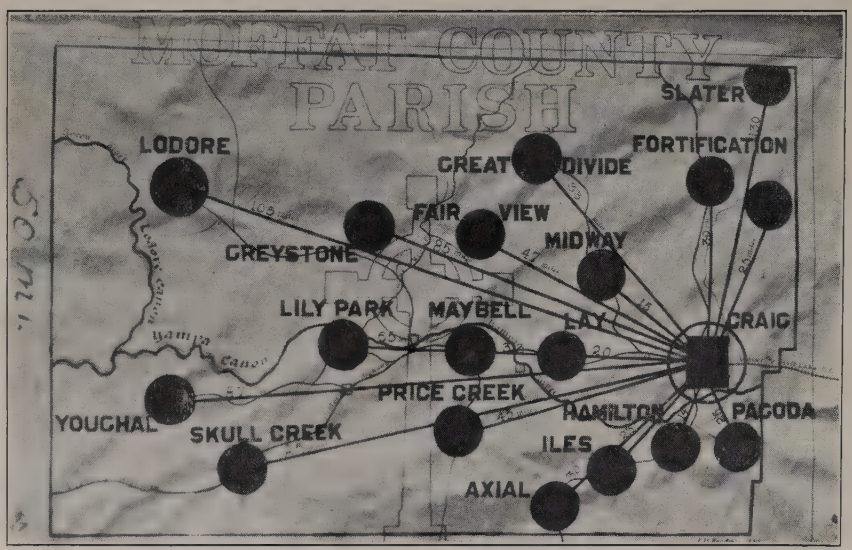
The Mansfield Plan.

A most recent experiment in the adaptation of the Larger Parish has been called "The Mansfield Plan." The effort is noteworthy in two respects. It aims to decrease "leakage" of people moving from town and village churches to those of like denomination in the cities. It also provides a method which small-city churches can use to recognize and pay a debt owed to near-by country churches. A very large share of members, leadership, and financial resource comes to city churches from the country. But little or no effort is made to make any return.

Two small-city churches discovered that members of near-by village churches of the same denomination had moved to town and deliberately joined other churches than their own. Inquiry as to the reason brought the frank reply, "You never showed any interest in us or in our churches while we were living in the country." Such neglect is the rule and not the exception. The Mansfield Plan attempts to remedy this situation. The two small-city churches joined with three village churches in forming a county fellowship. A Constitution and By-laws provided for a Parish Council which is made up of two delegates from each of the five churches. The ministers agree to exchange pulpits, and the congregations share activities of both town and country. An effort was thus made to create a "we," "our" and "us" feeling on the part of all, so that when the country folks came to town

to trade or to live they would feel that the two small-city churches belonged to them. When the city people rode out into the country they would be conscious of a "felt ownership" in the village churches and their work. The co-operating churches are all of one denomination, but the door is open for the Association to become inter-denominational.

The method has possibilities. It is bound to produce a desirable loyalty and to decrease denominational losses. The plan also presents a way by which small-city churches can acknowledge the debt owed to their sister churches of the countryside. They can use it to make actual returns. Real interest can be shown in country churches and help can be given them in their work. The Mansfield Plan may accomplish other ends. People are bound to move to such small-city centers, and they need to be prepared for what they will find there. And small-city churches should also make an effort to understand what country folks have been used to in their own churches, so as to make them feel at home when they move in to the larger centers to live. "City Churches Big Brothering Country Churches," suggests a much needed practice.



A Decentralized County Larger Parish—Colorado

The One-man Larger Parish.

A most important type of Larger Parish is given least thought or consideration, and many do not consider it a Larger Parish at all. This is the one-man and possibly the one-church parish which refuses to work only at the center and presses out to serve the adjacent countryside. Multitudes

of aggressive ministers are covering whole counties in this manner. If the Larger Parish Plan is a matter of vision and passion for serving the open country, while ministering to the village or town, then these are Larger Parishes. They are also most important since they will always be the many, whereas the more elaborate type of Larger Parish will be the few. And ministers of one-man Larger Parishes who have worked long and faithfully to discover, train, and departmentize their own local leadership, deserve special commendation. For this is a major objective of the Larger Parish plan. The most noteworthy Larger Parishes are usually the direct result of such conscientious work on the part of the ministers and peoples of what were originally one-man fields. Interest in an "enlarging parish" sent them out to multiply themselves over a constantly increasing area, and by means of every kind of helpful service.

Single Activity Co-operation.

Churches of different denominations cannot always be won over at once to the idea of pooling all their activities and resources. It is doubtful whether such complete co-operation should be undertaken until there is complete understanding of the meaning and worth of such procedure. And the best way to teach complete co-operation is to begin to co-operate in a few things. This is being done. Young people within certain prescribed districts are increasingly co-operating in the work of their organizations. Churches are uniting in the conduct of Daily Vacation Bible Schools and Week Day Schools of Religion. Such team-play is in the right direction. It has in mind the welfare of areas, and is likely to lead to a more and more complete adoption of the Larger Parish Plan.

Administrative Use of Larger Parish Method.

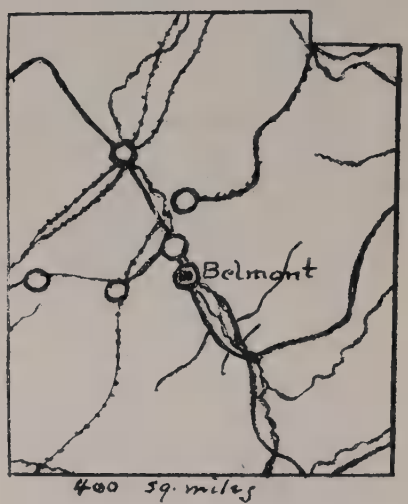
Denominational State executives are adapting Larger Parish methods as a means of getting better results, and also a wiser way of administering Mission Aid. The procedure is somewhat as follows. The county is taken as the administrative unit. The basis for a reasonable church constituency recommended by the Home Missions Council is adopted; viz., a population of two hundred and fifty families, or one thousand people, to support a minister on a minimum of fifteen hundred dollars and a parsonage. A state executive finds that there are ten churches of his denomination in a particular county. They exist independently of each other, and work alone. Five of the churches have resident pastors, who must, however, eke out a living by taking on "preaching appointments." They go outside the county for such purposes, while other ministers come in from other counties to serve several of the ten churches. This utterly foolish procedure is stopped. The state executive figures out how many ministers are needed to serve the

churches adequately, and guarantee them and their families comfortable livings. Able men are secured who are to reside in the county and give full time to its churches. The four or five men chosen are specialists in different lines of religious and church work; e. g., worship, evangelism, religious education, finance, social and recreational work. The ministers exchange services and work in a co-ordinated team-play. All have the welfare of the entire county in mind. The churches receive more and better care under such an adaptation of the Larger Parish Plan. They are served by what amounts to a staff of specialists along different lines. They also come to think in terms of the county and of each other. Whatever Mission Aid is necessary under this arrangement is given to the work as a whole, and not to the individual ministers or churches.

Such statesmanlike administration on the part of state executives may well be prophetic of like interdenominational policy and practice. The latter is entirely feasible. Moreover, the religious world is waiting for a day when denominational executives shall have the courage to act out their honest convictions in this manner. Any area or state can be freed from over-churching and over-looking when this is done. And the nation will watch their step.

The Seminary Laboratory Parish.

The Larger Parish has great possibilities as a place for laboratory privileges of various sorts. It offers a best type of practical experience by which to influence college students to enter the Christian ministry. It is equally advantageous as a field for seminary practice work, and for post-graduate visitation experience and study. Money spent to give college students opportunities for work in summer vacations, or during "a year out of school," on Larger Parishes would net more recruits for the ministry than will any other method. Such work can best argue its own merits as a vocation for life, and it is "recruiting by the laboratory method." One Larger Parish sent three men into the ministry, not one of whom was headed that way. There is likewise a great demand for men who have been fitted by teaching and experience to establish and lead Larger Parishes. Seminaries have begun to teach the theory and practice in the class room, but actual experience needs to go hand in hand with this teaching. And beginnings are made. Several seminaries are either establishing or adopting Larger Parishes as lab-



Western Counties Mission, New York

oratory adjuncts to their curricula. Again, much is said and written about the need for a year's "religious interneship" on the part of theological students after graduation, and before they assume full charge of a parish. "Scholarships" might well be supplied by seminaries and Mission Boards to make such experience possible on Larger Parishes set apart, or perhaps supported, for the purpose.

A youthful product of a well known Larger Parish gives this testimony. "College and seminary students find real vision and scientific procedure on the Larger Parish. A six months' experience in such a 'life laboratory' is invaluable in understanding human nature, in recognizing community forces, in learning how to build a Christian community by intelligent analysis and persistent friendship. Some Larger Parishes would find greater usefulness by serving as training areas for Christian leaders. A few would come at a time, take an active part in the parish program, study human nature in the light of existing environmental stimuli, learn much in way of method, thrill greatly in the presence of God in the lives of the Staff."

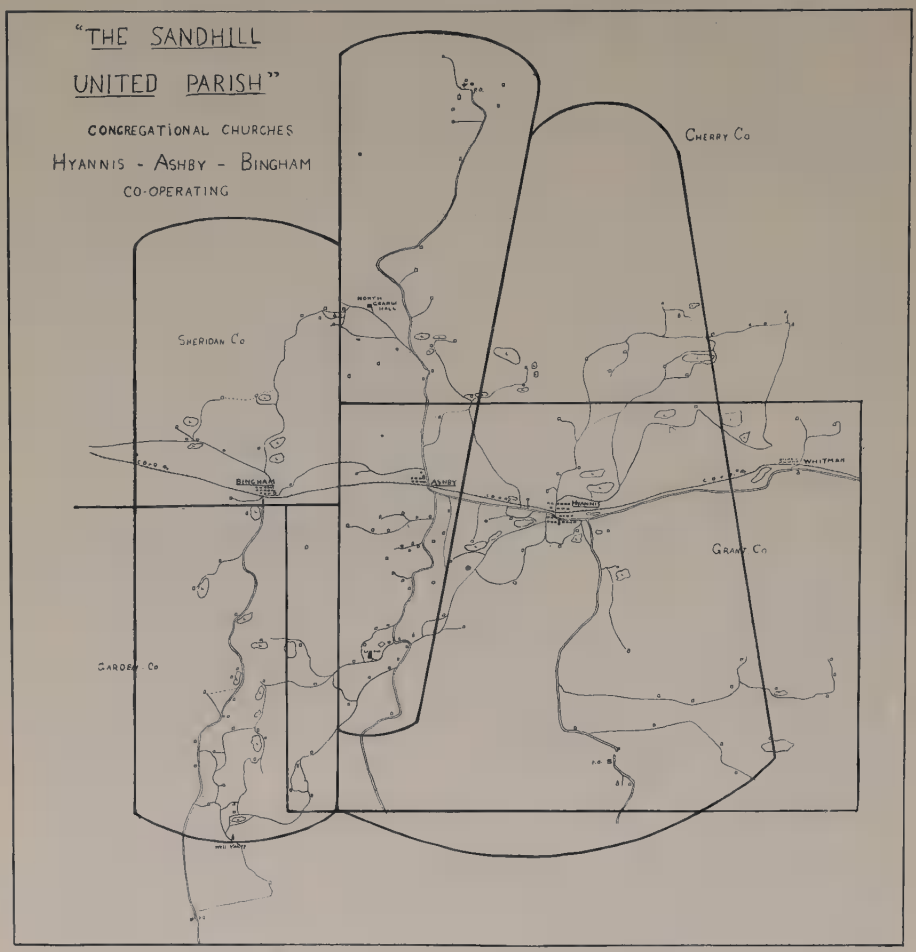
VI. LARGER PARISH AREAS

The Larger Parish specializes in a ministry over areas. The selection of the exact territory to be included in such parishes is an important matter, and will have a great deal to do with conditioning their efficiency and permanence. Every conscientious minister of a town or village church should feel it not only a duty, but a privilege, to go out from his center to render the maximum of service to folks of the open country. The Larger Parish deliberately chooses a town and country area which is to be considered as a single parish. The boundaries of Larger Parishes will be variously determined.

1. Topographical conditions may indicate the logical territory which should be included within the boundaries of a Larger Parish, setting off a rather definite geographical and therefore associational unit of countryside. In the West and South, for example, there are valleys whose territory and people are hemmed in by mountains on every side. These furnish ideal locations for a use of the Larger Parish Plan. It is very easy to lay out a seemingly workable Larger Parish upon a map, only to find out that actual physical conditions of mountain, valley, lake or stream, forbid such arbitrary and theoretical selection. On the other hand, the Larger Parish is intended to overcome conditions which shut people off by themselves, making them the victims of an isolation and loneliness which the use of such a plan can mitigate.

2. Distance and roads impose their limitations upon Larger Parish boundaries. Good roads have enlarged the radius of the farmer's community from the team-haul to the possible mileage of the automobile. Such modern

improvements form the best argument for the Larger Parish and the best of assistance in carrying out the Plan. In some sections of the country distances are still so great, and farm houses are so far apart, that churches and schools are almost impossible. In these vast areas the Larger Parish may



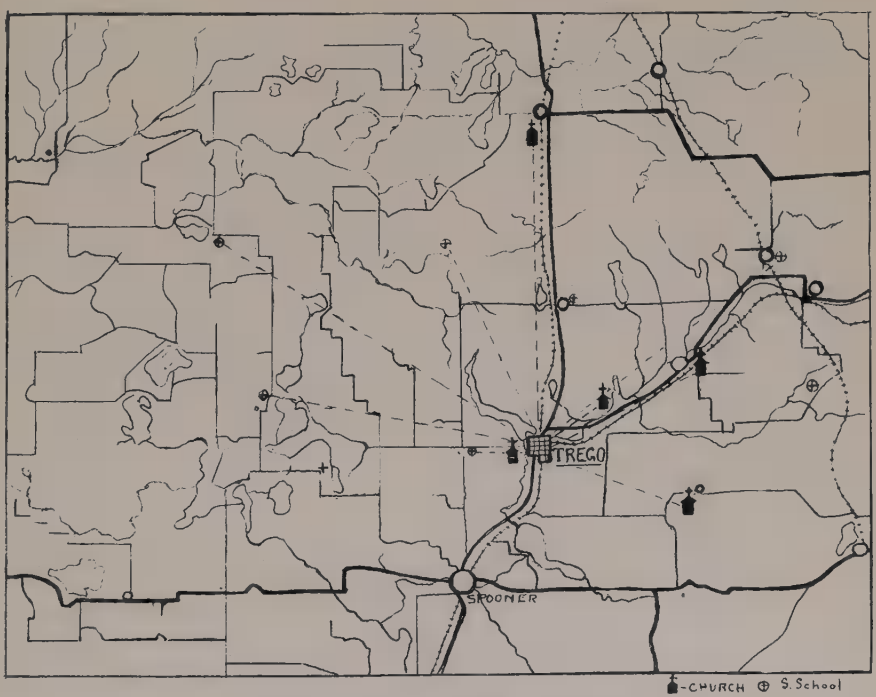
Sandhill Larger Parish, Nebraska—Trade Areas

well become what might be termed a parish-at-large. The "church in thy house" and much needed social privileges must be provided by a chapel car with a baby organ and hymn books, a motion picture projector, Sunday-school helps, libraries, religious literature, and other helpful equipment. Larger Parishes should, however, be limited to such sized areas as will make possible frequent, systematic, and efficient social and religious visitations.

3. Trade areas are most easily and naturally incorporated into Larger Parishes. People who resort to a common center for business and social

purposes will generally be more or less acquainted. They are also most likely to possess common traditions which will make it possible to weld folks of different kinds and neighborhoods into a community-at-large which can be embodied in a Larger Parish. It is exceedingly difficult to knit communities together which have little or nothing in common, or to combine folks who simply will not mix. Nevertheless, the Larger Parish often accomplishes just such seemingly impossible undertakings.

4. The Larger Parish is also more easily promoted over an area where the co-operating peoples are of the same or similar religious faith. The denominational Larger Parish may therefore be the most frequent. But the



The Trego Larger Parish—Wisconsin

interdenominational Larger Parish is a more recent and hopeful achievement. It is in line with an ultimate purpose of the Larger Parish Plan. Denominations represented by churches within a given area unite in underwriting and otherwise helping a joint occupation of the field, and thus do away with wasteful and unchristian religious competitions. Kingdom interests are given a complete right of way. Such Parishes attain a practical and immediate union of forces. Following this program will soonest lead to the accomplishment of the more perfect church union, which is the sincere hope of many.

5. County lines sometimes form the limits of successful Larger Parish efforts. There is, however, the same objection that applies to such definition of communities. County lines are merely matters of a surveyor's chain, whereas communities and parishes are social affairs. A county line may cut through, leaving an important part of a logical and actual parish or community outside the area thus arbitrarily indicated.

6. Boundaries of Larger Parishes are subject to change with time and growth. No Larger Parish must be expected to be born full-grown. The best development is gradual, and is a matter of accretion rather than of imposition. Beginnings are made at centers, and movement is outward. More area and other churches will be brought into combination as the Larger Parish demonstrates its own real worth and efficiency. Larger Parishes should also keep within such limits of time, ability, and equipment as are necessary to do things thoroughly and well.

VII. ORGANIZATION

A Larger Parish is organized according to the area to be served and problems to be met. It is inaugurated most successfully where some pastor has enjoyed a long ministry, and has thus been able to lead his people out with him into an ever developing program of real activities. He will have become an adept at sowing seeds of "divine discontent," and making folks eager to adventure with him in the sublime task of making over a large section of countryside into a miniature Kingdom of God. The latter has been defined as "a society of friendly, loving folks."

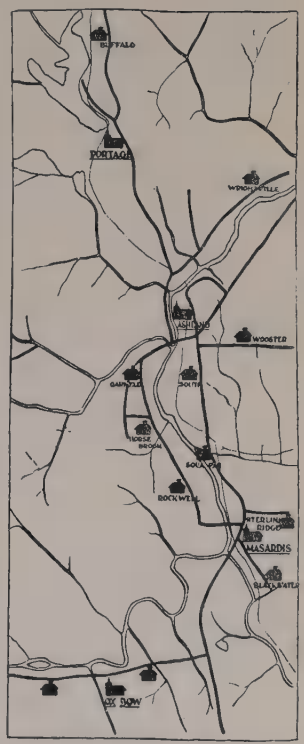
1. Organizing a Larger Parish.

A Larger Parish might be formed anywhere along lines of a New England adventure. In this case, the Larger Parish was made possible by the sacrificial service of a minister who possessed "the long term view." For more than ten years he had worked single-handed and alone over a large area as practically its only Protestant minister. He refused to be diverted, and continued through the years to dream dreams and see visions. All the time he labored incessantly to make his dreams come true. In doing this he became acclaimed universally throughout the region as more than a minister—he was "an institution."

Logical boundaries for this parish of some three hundred square miles were imposed by a somewhat isolated condition, topographical characteristics, and the fact of a single industry—potato raising. Four churches and ten school districts formed logical units for a religious co-operative, patterned after one the farmers were even then contemplating in the potato industry.

The slogan of the undertaking became, "Do in religion what you propose doing in spuds."

Villages, neighborhoods, and homes within the area were visited one after another. "Set ups" were carefully planned, and were usually held at some farm home. The whole area was invited to an afternoon of general good times. A supper was served such as only farm homes can supply. Afterward, each person was called upon to do his "stunt," until everyone's guard was down and all were friends. The visiting team then carefully explained the Larger Parish Plan. The people were informed as to the possible advantages of pooling their resources so that together they might get a ministry, program, and equipment such as no one community had ever been able to get alone. It was suggested that individual churches forget their selfish interests, and that they enter into a co-operative undertaking with other churches and peoples. In this way the common needs of the countryside might be met. Strong churches could bear the burdens of the weak, and a religious fellowship might be provided broad enough to include all and exclude none. At such gatherings the communities were also asked to appoint two representatives who would meet with similar delegates from other localities at some future time and place. This group would then discuss the whole project, ascertain the total available resources, and form some definite plan of organization to be reported back to the various communities for their approval.



Aroostook Larger Parish

The community representatives were later called together, and after thorough discussion, voted to inaugurate the proposed experiment in religious co-operation. It also formed itself into a temporary Larger Parish Council which would carry on until its members had conferred with their communities and the vote to establish the Larger Parish had been ratified. A few weeks later a newly elected Council adopted a Constitution and By-laws, which made the Council the promotional and governing agency of the Larger Parish. Delegates elected to represent the co-operating churches and localities, members of the ministerial staff, and others interested in the Larger Parish activities were empowered to submit reports, suggest programs, and to dispose of all matters of business which might be brought before the Council. Meetings of the Larger Parish Council were to

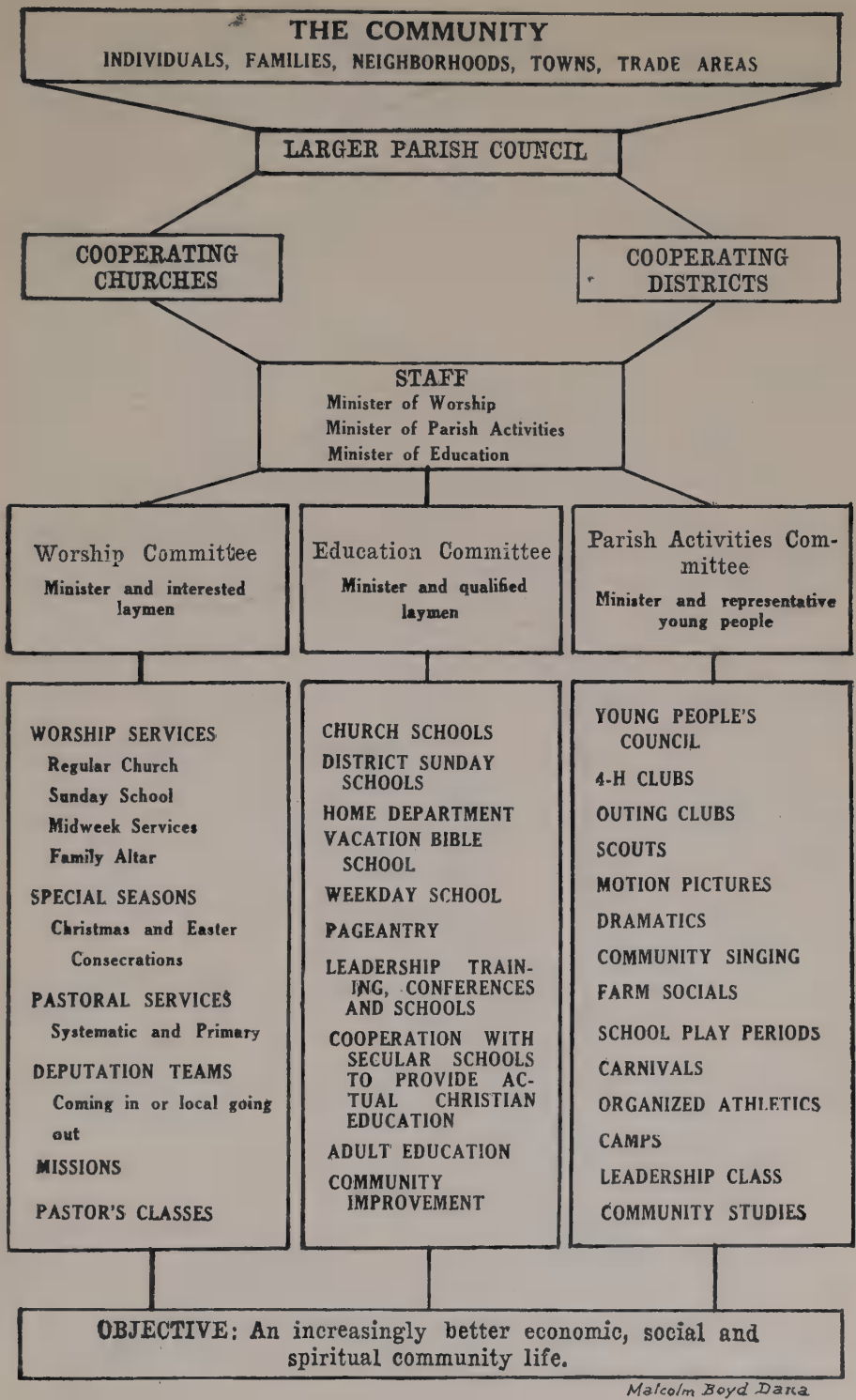
be held every six weeks, with worship as well as business a part of the order of the day. The staff was also expected to meet regularly every Monday to review the activities of the previous week and to plan together what should be done during the following seven days.

The example set by the older people in forming a Larger Parish Council was not without its effect upon the young of the region. They felt that they also had a contribution to make to the common welfare, and so formed a young people's Larger Parish Council. Two delegates from this group were elected to sit upon the adult Council to represent the young people and to care for their interests.

In absolute harmony with Larger Parish method, this experiment in religious co-operation was inaugurated on a basis of a five year trial. The whole enterprise would then be reviewed, and policies and plans reformulated. Such a provision is a wise one for many reasons. The general conditions which dictated the original program are likely to undergo radical change during five years. Original promoters of the Larger Parish may move away, and the initial enthusiasm may wane through a neglect of continued education in Larger Parish theory and practice. There is also a constant difficulty in finding ministers who have been trained for this special type of work, or who are experienced in it. It is equally hard to secure ministers who can and will gear into an established program, and one which calls for unusual vision, abundant initiative, ceaseless industry, and a large capacity for unselfish team-play. The history of Larger Parishes also reveals the fact, that there nearly always comes a crisis when it becomes necessary to get "a second wind."

2. The Larger Parish Council.

The Larger Parish Council is fundamental in an efficient Larger Parish. The membership of the Council usually consists of official representatives of each of the affiliated churches and parishes. Each of the churches votes separately and elects its own representatives. There is nearly always a membership in the Larger Parish of individuals who are not members, or even attendants, of any of the churches within the area, and who may be only transient or absentee residents of the communities. They are, however, interested in the co-operative movement, and contribute to the general budget. It is sometimes customary, therefore, to have a number of members-at-large chosen from this constituency by a majority vote of the church representatives in the Council. All staff workers are ex-officio members of the Council, but are allowed to vote on questions other than those pertaining to their own employment or salaries. If mission aid is accepted, it is generally the custom to give certain state officials a place and vote in the Council. It is



Malcolm Boyd Dana

also frequently found advantageous to have the regular Parish Council meetings open to any persons who are vitally interested, or who are in any way connected with the work of the Parish. They may take part in discussions but cannot vote.

The use of the Larger Parish Council involves principles which should be clearly understood. This body is essential because it gives opportunity to do *with* folks rather than *for* them. Country people are often accused of not being interested in community affairs. Where such delinquency exists, it may often be explained by the fact that they are given little or no part in the leadership and management of such activities. This is a wrong policy. For the only real way to produce "we feeling" and impart "felt ownership," is to give people the opportunity to invest time and talent in the conduct of community institutions and affairs. The Larger Parish, in the second place, is a representative body, and therefore practices real democracy in religion. It is team-play which has the good of all in mind. Such a Council makes the parish ministers conscious of a force backing them, which will help mightily to bring about worthy achievements. The ministers also know that the Council will hold them accountable for lack of vision, initiative, or hard work in "bringing things to pass." Indolence or laziness cannot exist where there is an efficient Larger Parish Council. Again, the effect of the Council on its membership is salutary. Working together in continuous co-operation makes the members of the Council, and the people they represent, cease to think and act in terms of mere churches or denominations. Petty jealousies between neighborhood and neighborhood, and wrong feelings between town and country, tend to disappear. There comes a thrill in being truly Christian. Moreover, a religious enterprise which concerns itself with every phase of community life, commands respect, and attracts a hitherto unknown following. It wins a new support, and makes available financial resources of those who have been "not interested." Men whom the traditional church program fails to attract, and others who have been alienated from the church because of its competitive practices of religion, are won to the support of Larger Parishes. Finally, the work promoted by a Larger Parish Council and its constituents can get and hold a competent ministry, making it possible to bring near and remote places and peoples together in working out a vitally enlarged community program.

3. The Larger Parish Staff.

A program which is to function over a large area, and during seven days of the week, demands a multiple ministry of trained specialists and a departmentized division of labor. The Larger Parish Council therefore elects a staff of two or more workers. Sometimes all members of the staff are called by all of the churches, thus making them belong to the parish

Goshen Hole Larger Parish—Wyoming

as a whole. Each staff worker will be assigned or called to several churches and out-stations, although he promotes his own specialty over the entire area. It is becoming increasingly evident that one member of the staff should be a woman. She can and will do certain kinds of work a man cannot or would not do. Experience argues for at least three workers on a Larger Parish which covers any considerable area. They have been called by the following names with duties as indicated.

Minister of Worship His particular work is to stimulate public and private worship in all of the churches and homes within the Larger Parish.

Minister of Education He is responsible for the organization and continued efficiency of modern church-schools and week day religious education.

Minister of Parish Activities He will promote social and recreational activities throughout the Larger Parish.

The first two members of the Staff should be college and seminary trained men. The third is very often a carefully selected student or Y. M. C. A. worker trained in social, recreational, and athletic lines.

Regular weekly meetings of the Staff are held. Conscientious effort is made on Larger Parishes to conserve the devotional life of the workers in all of their meetings and associations, lest machinery and secondary activities become ends in themselves rather than means to an end. Plans are made at Staff meetings for the coming week, and the duties are assigned. Each minister works with a full knowledge of what his associates are doing, thus preventing any overlapping of effort or waste of time or energy. An intelligent, generous, and harmonious team-play is secured, which is absolutely essential to the success of any Larger Parish.

Considerable argument is advanced favoring the idea of having all three members of the Staff live at the same center, easily accessible to all points of the parish. If the area is remote and extensive, it seems the more advisable. Such residence affords nearness, frequency of association, and a consequent maximum of conference together. It favors an absolutely impartial service to all of the churches and places co-operating in the Larger Parish effort. It often proves very difficult for the parish ministers to work as departmental specialists over the whole region when they live far apart, or at extreme ends of the parish. Additional expense as well as inconvenience may be involved. However, circumstances alter cases, and there are many strong arguments for having the Staff members live in different parts of the parish.

4. Volunteer Leadership.

All Larger Parishes are not able to support a multiple staff of paid specialists. And it is entirely possible to secure a departmentized work with local and volunteer leadership. In point of fact, the efficiency and worth of

ENFIELD FALLS LARGER PARISH
New York

any Larger Parish, whether presided over by expert leadership or not, may be measured by the amount of leadership it discovers, mobilizes, trains, and uses. The failure to do this is perhaps the most frequent Larger Parish weakness, and a cause of temporary or total failure. Parishioners are too prone to let their specialists do all the work, and there is often an equal willingness on the part of the leaders to assume the burden because "we can do things so much quicker and better." This is contrary to correct theory and practice. A primary objective of Larger Parish staff activities is to find things for people to do, to pick the right persons to do them, and to get the maximum of parish work done by using different individuals where they are best fitted to serve. Such policy will ensure programs, and the activities will become confirmed habits. Days of arguing the relative merits of the Larger Parish will pass, and all that believe will be together and of a mind to work.

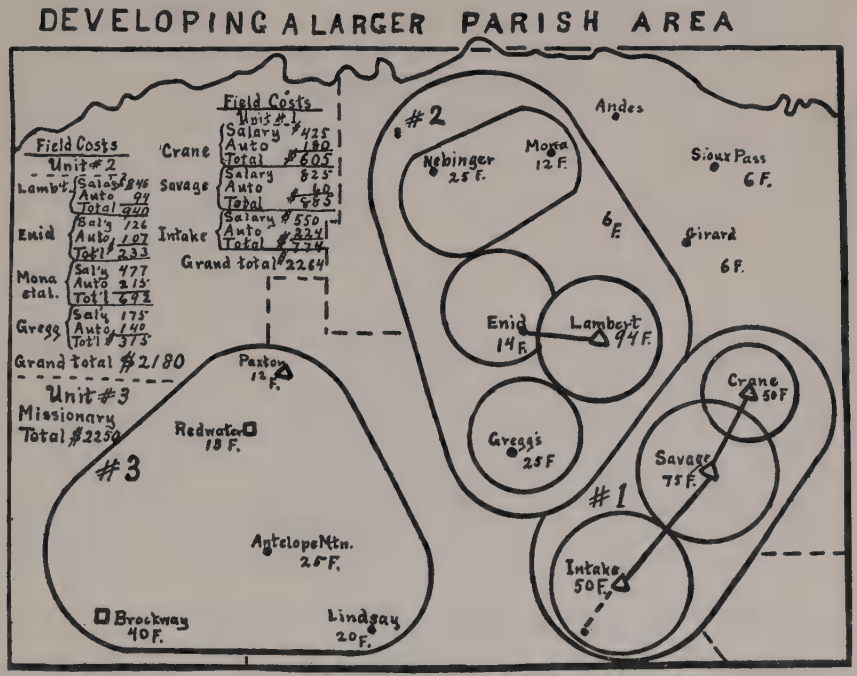
5. The Budget.

The Larger Parish is a co-ordinating agency for combining a number of parishes in a joint service over an area of inhabited countryside. It operates by means of the Larger Parish Council. This Council determines what sized budget is necessary to carry on the work of the entire parish. Denominational loyalities are not necessarily disturbed. The co-operating churches still continue to care for the expenses and upkeep of their own church equipments, and they give to their own denominational benevolences and work. They do, however, combine to provide a general budget large enough to support the Larger Parish workers, and the activities of their departments over the entire area. At the Council meeting which immediately precedes the annual meetings of the various churches, the representatives of the latter hand in itemized summaries of their needs and opportunities for the coming year. The Council considers them carefully and estimates the total budget necessary to provide for at least the most important of the items presented. Church quotas are assigned, and each church acts upon them at its annual meeting, approving the total budget presented and pledging its assigned share.

The Larger Parish has its own official treasurer, who handles all moneys, and pays all bills ordered by the Council. It is usually found convenient to have this official an employee of the bank located at the most central point of the parish. The treasurers of the co-operating churches may act as collectors to gather up and hand in the amounts due from each church or community as their part of the overhead budget.

The raising of the yearly budget is viewed as more than a mere matter of collecting funds for support of the parish work. It is a vital part of the Larger Parish program to educate men, women and children in stewardship.

Only those who invest in it are likely to be much interested in the work of the Larger Parish. This suggests another consideration. Where Missions Aid is accepted, or if there are endowments, the people are liable to shirk their fair share in the support of a Larger Parish. And the ministerial leadership is just as likely to be delinquent in pressing matters financial. Where the Larger Parish is made possible by financial assistance from a denominational Board, it should be according to a decreasing scale. The amount given and received should automatically decrease a certain amount each year, until the parish shall, if possible, have attained full self-support. A yearly "every member canvass" is now almost the universal method of raising Larger Parish budgets, with the canvassing done by men rather than women. An even better plan is indicated by the slogan, "Every member of every household a contributor." Contributions should be solicited and received for the work as a whole. A final point of honor with the efficient Larger Parish is to meet all financial obligations in a prompt and business like manner. The ministers and other creditors are not required to "wait for their pay." The Council makes arrangements at the bank whereby it can do the borrowing, and pay the necessary interest, rather than compel others to do it. Regular statements are issued to all contributors and the parish kept thoroughly informed about all business and financial matters.



VIII. THE LARGER PARISH PROGRAM

There is no standardized program to be used alike in all Larger Parishes. A "community audit" and local analysis always determines what shall be the program. Moreover, the latter is always cumulative. Activities are dictated by a constant study of the unfolding needs and opportunities of each individual parish. Programs evolved in this manner are sure to be effective because made for the particular places and peoples who are to use them. Collective experience warrant certain generalities as to Large Parish Programs.

1. The Larger Parish Program will be *definite,* with details worked out and visualized; it will be *constructive,* having aims and fixing goals; it will be *workable,* made on the spot and usable by those who must carry it out.

2. The Larger Parish Program will be *inclusive, statesmanlike,* and *not too conservative.* As a plan it will be *democratic,* including everybody; it will be *expansive,* bounded by community possibilities; it will be *generous,* co-operating with all agencies working for the common good; it will be *Christian,* "serving all of the people, all of their interests, and all of the time."

3. The Larger Parish Program will "do first things first"; it will do a few things at a time and do them well; it will carry through to a finish what is begun.

4. The Larger Parish Program will be guided by a policy of "do" and not "don't"; it will try to displace evil by providing and supervising the good.

5. The Larger Parish Program will seek to supplement and not duplicate work which other agencies are best fitted to do; it will co-operate with all efforts to secure for the countryside every worth-while institution and privilege.

6. The Larger Parish Program will always be alert to discover, mobilize, train, and use local talent; it will utilize all kinds of folks; it will make every effort to stimulate pride and contentment in rural and home environment.

7. The Larger Parish Program will use and promote the perfect technic suggested by the three words *organize, deputize,* and *supervize;* it will also endeavor to *spiritualize* all activities by showing men how ordinary every day work can become a real part in building the Kingdom of God.

8. The Larger Parish Program will give equal consideration to town and country; it will acquire and use "the fine art of brothering folks into the Kingdom"; it will "promote acquaintance making on a large scale."

IX. EQUIPMENT

Community Center Building. The Larger Parish uses what is termed a religio-social program that takes into account the whole man and the entire life process. It functions seven days of the week. Such a program requires ample equipment if it is to be efficient, an equipment which is dictated by a careful and painstaking analysis of community needs and possibilities. A three-unit community center building is usually the most important item of need. Such a building should be designed by a competent architect who has had actual experience in planning that kind of a building, and who understands and sympathizes with the type of enterprise in which it is to play a most important part. "Stock plans," or others drawn by a local architect, "lest we offend one of our own citizens," are dear at any price. The use of such plans accounts very largely for the unsightly, ill-suited, and unkempt buildings which are a perpetual handicap to rural religion and the country church. A tragedy of the country is the fact that such buildings are a rule and not the exception. The effect is inevitable. Lack of respect for religion is largely due to ill-advised church buildings and their generally poor upkeep. The surest index of the quality of religion in the average community is the kind and condition of its church properties.

Three Unit Community Center Bldg., Collbran, Col.

Good church buildings adapted to the special needs of the countryside are possible. A superior community-center building may be secured for a minimum of money cost by a well supervised use of contributed labor and material. Building programs should "adventure some in the name of the Lord," and should consider both present and future needs. But caution must be observed not to build a structure whose size, original cost, and maintenance expense are utterly beyond the possible resources of the area which is to be served. Such doing will bind heavy burdens and make religion a drudgery rather than a joy.

Worship Unit.

The worship unit of a community-center building should be ornate and churchly. For this building and its activities are to give tone to the whole

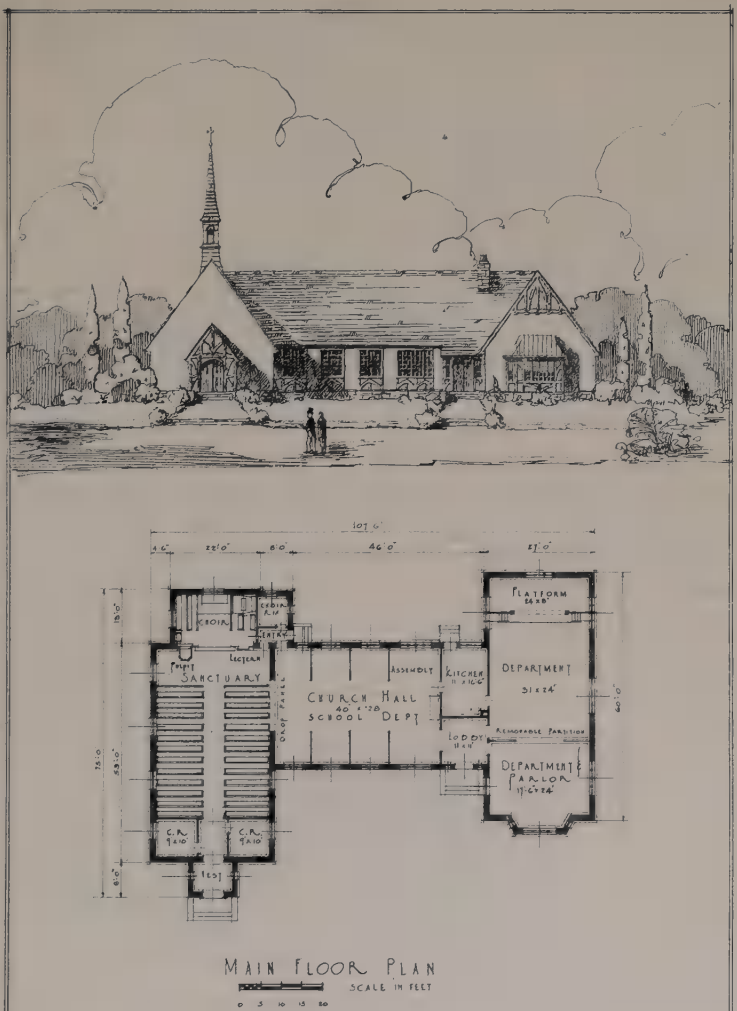
Larger Parish Program. It is entirely possible for a moderate priced structure to have such equipment as chancel, altar, pulpit, lectern, beautiful windows, and concealed lights, so that people can and will be moved to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. Simplicity in church buildings, as in other things, is the highest of arts. The church unit of the community-center building should be truly "a house of prayer," with its doors always open. A most important part of the Larger Parish Program is that of educating people in the proper use of such a building, in a genuine reverence for the house of God, and in an intelligent appreciation of a logical order of worship within its doors. The church auditorium in a community-center building should not be used for lectures, concerts, or forums. Other places are provided for such activities.

The Church-school Unit.

The importance attached to the modern religious education program requires that the educational unit of a community center building should be on a par with the most up-to-date consolidated school. This is equally true of its equipment. For the Larger Parish Plan is ambitious to emulate an earlier day when the church and school were close partners in every community. The church-school will supply individual class and departmental rooms. It will have the proper equipment for religious dramatics, pageantry, kindergarten, and project work. Every advantage will be afforded for Daily Vacation Bible Schools and Week Day Schools of Religion. The work done by the latter is most likely to be allowed on school time and accredited by school boards where there is unusual equipment and program, as well as exceptional leadership.

The Community-House Unit.

This part of a community-center building is of primary importance to a religio-social program which the rural church proposes to use in grappling with the so-called "country problem." Allurements which are drawing people away from the country are largely social, and rural peoples passively admit that such privileges "fate has decreed should exist only in cities." Nevertheless, certain agencies are alive to the opportunity, and commercialized amusements are steadily creeping into the country. These are generally poorest of the poor. An unpardonable neglect on the part of town and country peoples also allows these auspices to provide the places where youth especially is wont to foregather. The rural church has been wont to do little except thunder against such influences, and often to an extent which alienates young life and causes the general comment that "the parson and his church are dead set against anything and everything that I most want



THREE UNIT COMMUNITY CENTER TYPE BUILDING

1. Worship. 2. Religious Education.

3. Social and Recreational (usable for gymnasium)

to do." This is an incorrect policy of annihilation rather than one of sympathetic substitution. The Larger Parish religio-social program fights evil and exalts righteousness in a constructive and not a destructive manner. The community-center building is planned to be the church, plus the Y. M. and Y. W. C. A. equipment and program. The latter are, however, adapted to the countryside. The promotion of such activities can make country life as healthy, happy, and wholesome as any. Such effort places the church at the center, instead of the far circumference of things, by making it a social as well as strictly religious institution. There is a fundamental interest in saving souls. There is also the passion for saving men themselves and their environments. The church which uses these methods can become a powerful agency in making the boy or girl not only willing to grow up in the country, but later on to even stay there. This community-house unit will supplement and not duplicate. Where such equipment does not exist in the community, it will provide auditoriums, lecture and demonstration rooms, gymnasiums, showers, game rooms, library, rest room, moving picture apparatus, kitchen, electric light plant, and other conveniences. On Sunday the entire building can be used for worship and religious education purposes.

The original cost of a Community-Center Building is usually met by subscriptions solicited from every individual within the Larger Parish area. In return, every effort must be made to conserve the rights of those living in the country to their share in the use of the building. Maintenance will be cared for by the Larger Parish budget. Where the building is used by the schools and other organizations, equitable charges will lighten the burden of support.

Extension Service.

Providing that such a community-center building is as sociologically sound as the Larger Parish itself. Both have in mind serving a community which is made up of town and country, with a parish co-extensive with the trade area. The building itself is generally located in the largest and most central village within the area, and the place where townsman and farmer alike satisfy their more important religious, social, and recreational wants. The larger and more important activities will be promoted at this center. But the Larger Parish program specializes in ministering to people where they live, and is not willing that country districts should be utterly ignored by thoughtlessly town-centered programs and practice. While people own and live on their farms, there will always be neighborhoods whose values should be conserved. One member of the Larger Parish Staff is, therefore, an "extension man," whose special job is to play big brother to the whole outlying region. The community house program very often involves using the con-

solidated school busses to bring old and young in to the "doings at the big building." But a Larger Parish truck will also carry many of the privileges enjoyed there to the farthest circumference of the parish. One-room schools which have been abandoned because of consolidation, are often used for extension service neighborhood centers. They are utilized for socials, literary clubs, home dramatics, boy and girl club work, farm and home economic demonstrations, and many other such activities.

Extension Service Bus

Extension work is of utmost importance, and any Larger Parish budget should contain a generous allowance for equipment to care for the open country. This should include a transportation truck, athletic materials, baby organ and song books, motion picture projector and generator, Church-school and Daily Vacation Bible school supplies, and other things suggested by local needs. A supreme obligation of the Larger Parish is to render the maximum of service to the countryside. Members of the Larger Parish staff usually prefer to buy their own automobiles. A generous allowance should therefore be included in the budget for gasoline and upkeep. Many ministers are ready and wanting to minister to "marginal folks" and the "overlooked" in the country. But such work costs money. They cannot do it on the usually meager salaries paid them.

X. PROMOTION OF LARGER PARISHES.

The promotion of a Larger Parish, with its community-center building and extension program, requires a preliminary campaign of education. The Plan itself, and its local possibilities, should be thoroughly explained to every-

one concerned before any beginning is made. Such a campaign will be successful in just the measure that it is able to create a "felt want" for what the Larger Parish promises to give. The educational process will be long or short, as the people are ready and willing to engage in the proposed religious co-operative. The following steps are taken in promotional campaigns.

An Initial Group.

A successful Larger Parish campaign generally presupposes a minister who has been on the parish for a goodly number of years, and one who has acquired a thorough knowledge of Larger Parish theory and practice by previous experience or by painstaking investigation. There must also be an initial group of equally intelligent and influential people who are enthusiastic in support of their pastor and the proposed religious adventure. If the Larger Parish is to be interdenominational, and is to receive Mission Aid, the state officials of the co-operating denominations should, if possible, be in hearty accord with the undertaking. If the parish is to be made up of churches of a single denomination, then the State Superintendent, or similar official, should be consulted and his co-operation assured.

Parish Area.

Discover the logical territory which gives promise of being successfully incorporated into a Larger Parish. Select an area of inhabited land within which the people are fairly well acquainted and conscious of the fact that they have a majority of their interests in common. List the districts, neighborhoods, villages, and churches which can co-operate, and are likely to welcome such a movement as a Larger Parish.

Parish Program.

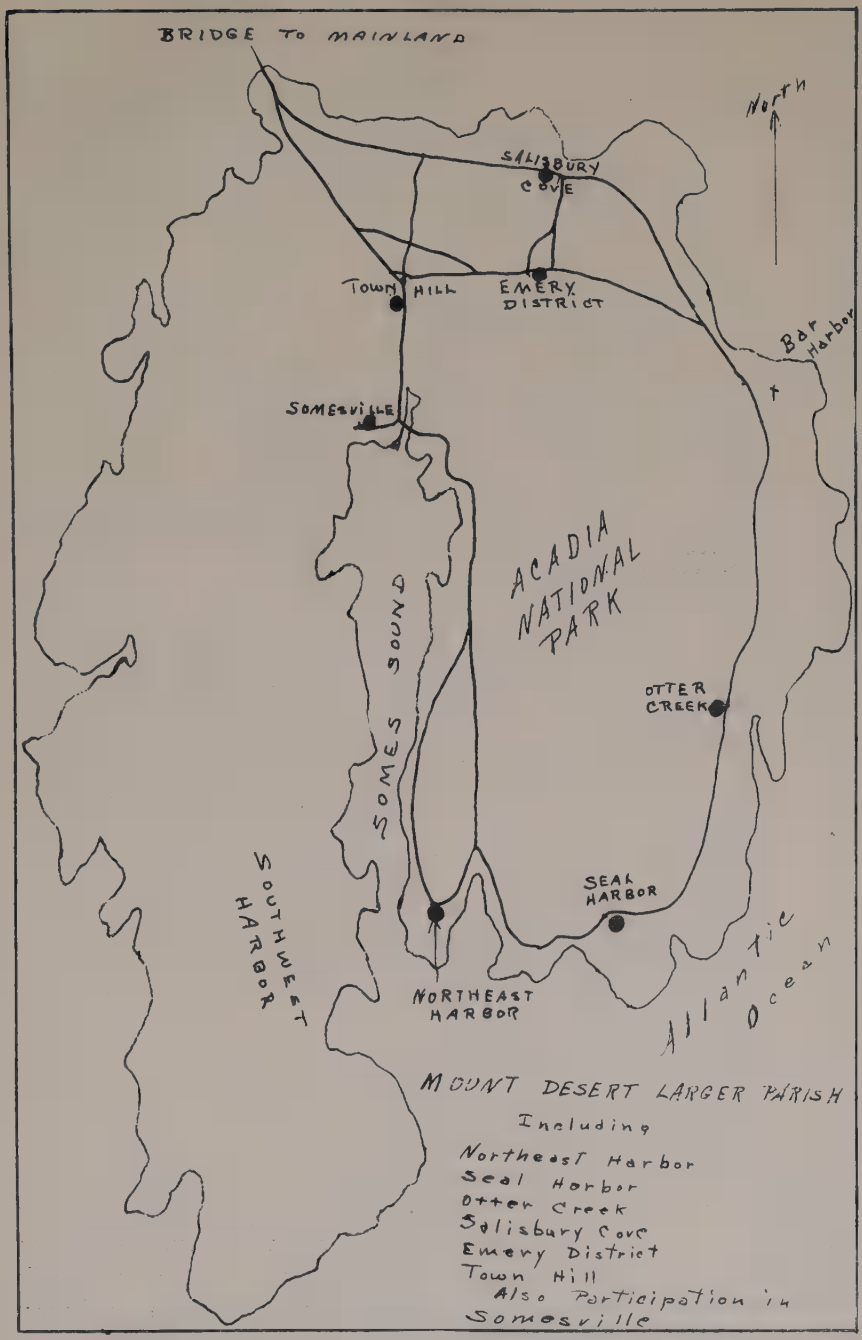
Formulate tentative plans and programs to present to the people who are to be interested, and which will provoke intelligent discussion and inquiry.

Parish Name.

Have a number of possible names for the Larger Parish ready to suggest, names which embody regional tradition or loyalties so universally felt that they will cause individual localities to forget selfish interests for something bigger and better. If there is a local farmer co-operative, or one in process of formation, let it suggest a campaign slogan such as—"Let us do in religion as with spuds."

Promotional Campaign.

When the promotional group has really "thought things through," and is ready to present definite plans for a Larger Parish, begin an every-community campaign of education. Form several "teams" to visit each village,



Mount Desert Larger Parish—Maine

neighborhood, and church. Plan these "set-ups" carefully. They might consist of a social afternoon at some farm home, school, or church, a neighborhood supper, and an evening of volunteer stunts. The gatherings may be cited as samples of what the Larger Parish proposes to feature as part of its regular schedule of activities. Demonstrate how the various localities can secure through the proposed co-operation religious and social privileges which have long been desired, but which no community has ever been able to get for and by itself alone. Show how the plan will allow larger communities to help the weaker ones by a pooling of interests. Also make clear just what part and place each community must take in the co-operative team-play. Have copies of Larger Parish programs used elsewhere on hand for general distribution. Ask for local suggestions and give evidence of a readiness to give them cordial consideration. Avoid every appearance of "trying to put something over." And finally, send the people out from the gathering enthusiastic and well informed. Suggest that it is now their privilege and duty to educate every man, woman, and child in their respective areas in the Larger Parish theory, in the methods and programs to be used, and in the benefits which all can share if the undertaking is given universal support.

Conference of Representatives.

After each public presentation of the Larger Parish Plan, and the fullest possible discussion, ask the communities visited to nominate two persons to represent them at a conference to be called at some future time and place when further and semi-official consideration will be given the proposed plan and initial steps taken to organize a Larger Parish. Do not attempt any permanent organization until pastors and laymen throughout the area have promised co-operation and support. Permanence will be assured by their readiness to give adequate consideration to the necessary moral and financial backing. Plans should not disregard limited resources and leadership of the people and region involved in the proposed Larger Parish.

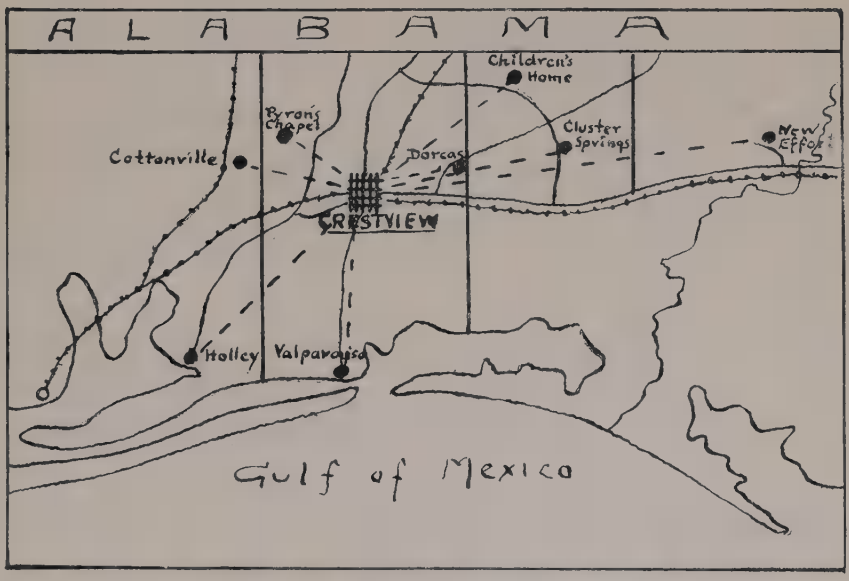
Temporary Organization.

Call the representatives elected by their various communities together. Discuss and formally approve the organization of a Larger Parish. Organize those present into a temporary Larger Parish Council. Estimate the size of budget necessary to inaugurate such a Larger Parish program as has been presented to the people, and which has been generally approved. Determine the financial quota each one of the co-operating communities should assume and underwrite. Appoint a committee to draft a suitable Constitution and By-laws to be considered and adopted by a permanent Larger Parish Council. Ask each of the representatives to return to his or her community and give a public report of all discussions, opinions, and actions of the temporary

Council. Require of them that they have their peoples vote (1) to ratify the proceedings and actions of the temporary Council, (2) to become constituent members of the Larger Parish, (3) to approve the name suggested for the Larger Parish, (4) to elect two official representatives who shall be members of the permanent Larger Parish Council, (5) to accept the quota assigned as their share of the general budget. Appoint a convener whose duty it will be to call the first official meeting of the permanent Larger Parish Council.

Permanent Organization.

The convener will call together the delegates elected to membership on the Larger Parish Council, when all or a majority of the member communities shall have selected their official representatives. When the group has assembled, make up the roll of charter members of the Council and of the communities they represent. Hear the report of the committee on permanent Constitution and By-laws, discuss and adopt. Elect officers, appoint committees, fix limits of Larger Parish, register member communities, as therein pro-



West Florida Associated Parishes—Florida

vided. Authorize a budget of size made possible by accepted quotas and assistance promised by denominational Boards or other auspices. Decide how many ministers shall constitute the Staff, and what shall be their departments of work. Elect or authorize such a staff. Inaugurate the Larger Parish, its program to run for a period of five years, and then to be reviewed and the

future of the parish determined. Accept any necessary Mission Aid with definite agreement upon a yearly decrease until self-support shall have been reached if possible.

Publicity.

Realize the value of good publicity, but avoid too much of it at the start. Never over-advertise. Keep the people of the Larger Parish area and homes fully informed about developments, activities, and successful attainments. Issue a Church Bulletin with carefully written "notices" for circulation at all points in the parish, and containing data concerning all Sunday and week-day appointments and meetings. Publish a mimeograph or printed Larger Parish paper, and get it into every house within the limits of the parish. Render full accountings of all moneys received and how they were used, and publish all proceedings of the Larger Parish Council. Have the sessions of the Council open in whole or in part to any persons who have shown special interest in the Larger Parish, and who would like to be present.

XI. LARGER PARISH OBJECTIVES.

1. To save strategic small churches in town and country situations and give them new and important missions.

2. To promote co-operation between churches and denominations on the basis of common tasks and those requiring trained leadership and effective supervision.

3. To consolidate churches which careful surveys show are necessary as well as disintegrating forces in the development of abundant living in rural sections.

4. To give to small churches advantages of leadership now possible only in the larger churches. To provide an increasing group of professional leaders who are able and accustomed to survey and analyze situations requiring more time and technical training than non-professional leaders in small churches can give.

5. To save rural centers from neglect by making available such specific leadership, guidance, and assistance as shall make possible the development of programs otherwise impossible for the small church.

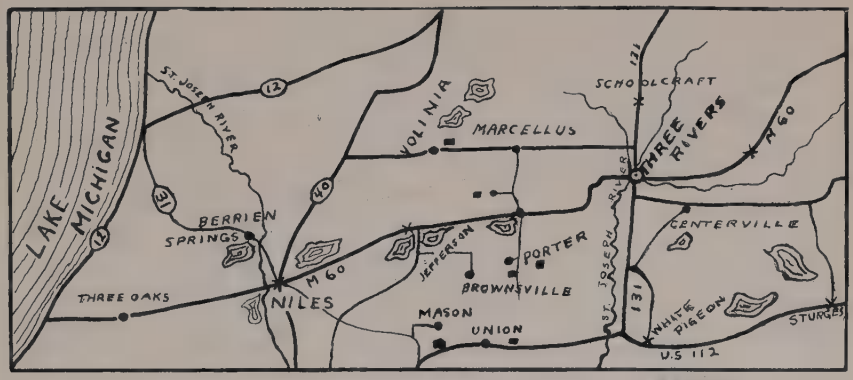
6. To devise programs based upon community interests, needs, and problems, and to train leaders who shall be capable of carrying out such programs made for the local churches and the parish as a community.

7. To develop community interest and support for programs which must go forward if the churches in less populous centers are to become vital and effective influences for Christian living and sharers in the total Kingdom enterprise. (Adapted from M. E. League Parish Conference).

XII. CONCLUSION.

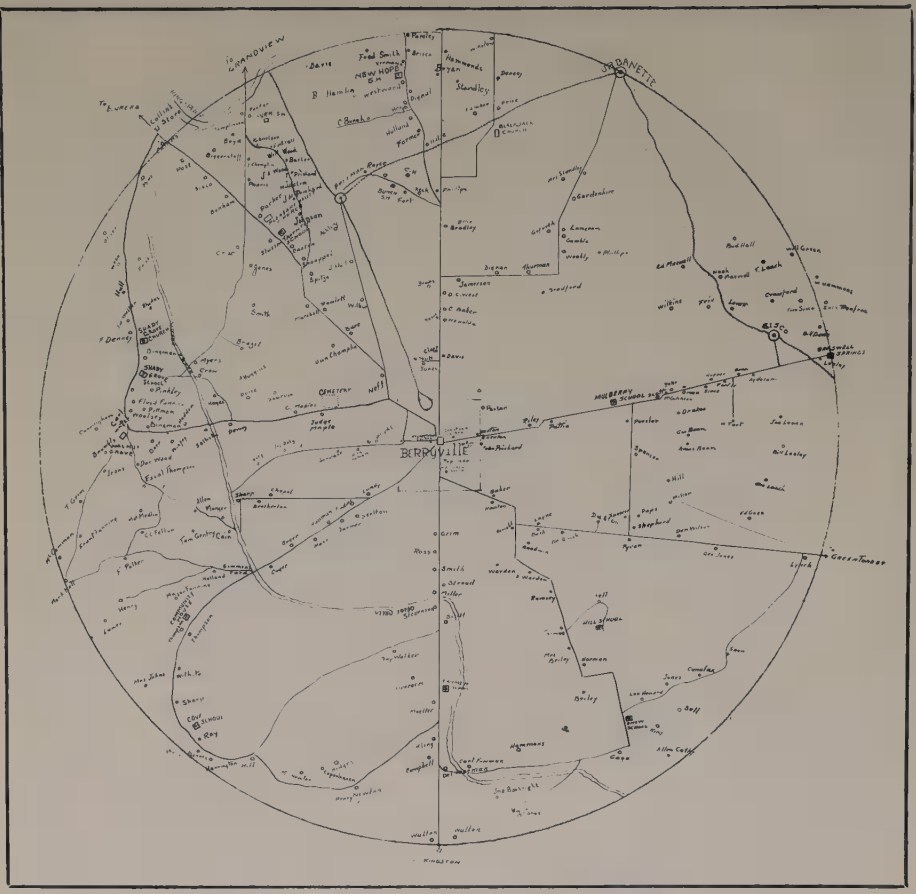
THIS little manual has attempted to give only a brief and partial description of the Larger Parish. Exceptions will probably be taken to some of its theories and statements. Nevertheless, the author will be satisfied if it shall influence an appreciable number of ministers to make their own parishes something *larger* than the traditional sort which serves merely one village, church, people, and denomination, thereby "overlooking" the near-by countryside. He also makes this unpretentious effort as a means of answering a daily increasing number of letters from every sort of person and auspices asking what the Larger Parish is, and how and where it should be promoted. A few concluding statements follow as to the nature and validity of the increasing popular and effective Larger Parish Plan, and its possible service to both town and country.

1. The Larger Parish Plan is *a practical method.* Selfish interests alone might argue for its adoption. For the maintenance of a regular circuit of preaching appointments, Sunday-schools, social activities, and farm



St. Joseph Larger Parish—Michigan

visitations, amounts to "feeders" of any church at the center. The farmer and his family can easily use their automobiles to attend service at the village or town church. They will probably be moved to do so in just the proportion that they are visited upon the farms. Large numbers of farm families will ultimately "move to town." They will join those churches whose ministers and peoples showed some interest in them while they lived in the country. It is undoubtedly true that "a house-going minister makes a church-going people." It is equally certain that only a farm-visiting pastor will build up a farmer's church, and that "that village church will fail that does not buttress itself up with a strong country work." Thus the Larger Parish plan of specializing in a persistent ministry to an incomparable people of the countryside



Larger Parish of Visitation Type—Arkansas

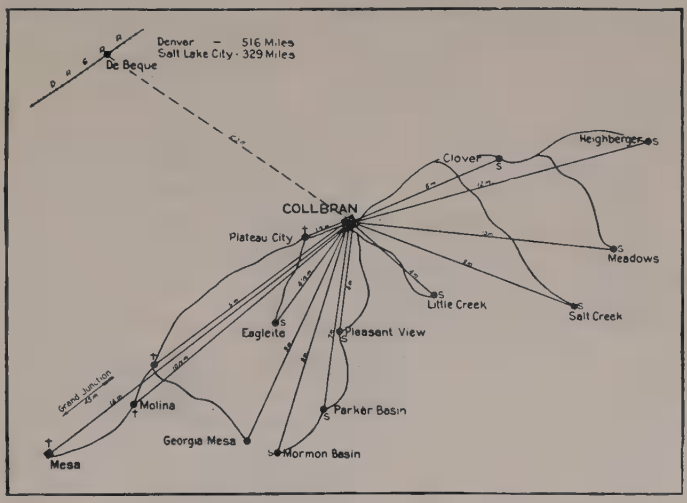
might well be adopted as a practical expedient. Every conscientious minister should consider it a Christian duty and privilege.

2. The Larger Parish Plan is *scientific method.* The Plan is not one to be superimposed as everywhere the same. It proceeds on another theory, that no two parishes are exactly alike, and that local conditions should always dictate the methods to be used. It recognizes that parish programs must also be evolved by means of painstaking and statesmanlike analyses of localities, peoples, and needs. These three statements embody an absolutely sound theory and technic—the facts of the community must be the law of the church . . . there is a situation to be met and not a theory proved . . . procedure should be from survey to service. In other words, every activity must meet an actual need.

3. The Larger Parish is *sociologically sound.* As an experiment in religious co-operation, it harmonizes with the following modern trends and movements in town and country life:

1. Decreasing and changing populations upon the soil are obliging folks of different nationalities, creeds, and temperaments to learn how to live and work together. An increased mingling of these people in social, political, and farm organizations is stimulating a growing desire for a like practice of democracy in religion. The Larger Parish Plan is bringing people together into larger and more inclusive church groups.

2. Aloofness and individualism have been the bane of the American farmer, and he has suffered from a lack in number, variety, and power of human contacts. Co-operation has not been characteristic of American farm life. The modern farmer is discovering that competition is not really the life of trade, and that it can never lead to a prosperous agriculture. Farmer co-operatives are therefore becoming examples and pacemakers throughout the



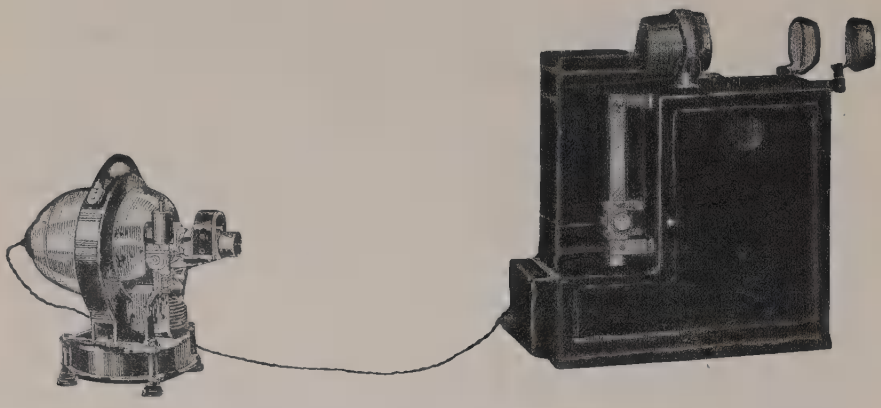
Plateau Valley Larger Parish—Colorado

countryside. The Larger Parish seeks to promote religious co-operation, which alone can make rural religion a unifying rather than a devisive force among country peoples.

3. The "little red school house" is passing, and the consolidated school is securing for country youth an abler teaching, a better equipment, and a larger group experience. It has created a new and enlarged single-service community which furnishes a unit of support more nearly approximating those of cities. The Larger Parish provides similar religious advantages for town and country. It welcomes the consolidated school as a prophecy of something akin to a consolidated church, and "a day of fewer and better churches." These can command and support efficient ministers and furnish extension service programs, which alone can give to the countryside the adequate religious privilege it is entitled to receive.

4. The abnormal "escape from the country" is convincing rural peoples that most of the attractions which draw young life to urban centers can and should be brought to the countryside. The churches have always been central in the mind and interest of country folks. They are even now looking to them as the best agency to bring to rural sections some of the attractions of city life, but according to some wise plan of selection and supervision. The Larger Parish does not use social and recreational activities as merely "bait" to attract youth, or as a method of salvaging "a waning and decadent interest in the country church." It incorporates them as important and legitimate parts of its regular program designed to minister to the body, the mind, and the soul of man.

5. Science has captured farming. One farmer does today what five men did yesterday; it is even claimed that ten per cent. of America's people are destined to feed the ninety per cent. If this shall come to pass, it means that that ten per cent. farmer is going to be the most intelligent and highly trained farmer of history. Already the rural minister and the country church are obliged to stand daily comparison with the machine farmer and scientific agriculture. And they are not meeting the test! During coming days, comparisons are sure to become more and more severe and exacting. The country minister is going to be obliged to match that ten per cent. farmer in intelligence, training, industry, and skill, or the latter will have nothing to do with him. The country church has also to equal the modern farm enterprise in machinery, technic, and results, or it will in like manner make no appeal to the ten per cent. farmer. The Larger Parish senses a very serious crisis in the history of rural religion and the country church. It does not propose any spending of time or energy in bemoaning "the plight" of either. It is preaching and practicing a religio-social program which can become as notable in its field as are the achievements of modern farmers and their farming.



Homelite Generator and Acme Stereopticon and Motion Picture Projector

APPENDIX

I. Larger Parish Constitution and By-laws.

II. Sample Larger Parish Program.

III. The Parish Survey.

IV. The Parish Map.

V. The Par Standard.

VI. Notable Larger Parishes (addresses).

VII. Bibliography Larger Parish.

I. LARGER PARISH CONSTITUTIONS

Mt. Desert Larger Parish, Maine.

PREAMBLE

It is felt that the moral and religious welfare of our several communities may be wisely served by a plan, already in succesful operation in many parts of the country, and known as a Larger Parish.

Such an organization does not contemplate any decrease of loyalty to existing churches, or to any scheme of social service, but proposes to co-ordinate these agencies, and to unite the entire community for the good of all.

It recognizes that much effort and money are wasted on separate and devisive undertakings, that meagre salaries must be paid in small villages, and that a small fraction of the population is practically concerned with movements for the general good. Both economy and efficiency depend on a more comprehensive unity, which shall be more representative of a general responsibility for the welfare of the town.

Our associated villages ought to illustrate, in the conduct of their affairs, the principle which Jesus Christ laid down in His great word: "For their sakes I sanctify myself." The self-respect of each citizen should be found in his service of all.

For this high purpose the best means immediately offered is through the creation of a Larger Parish. It is not to be anticipated that such an organization can be born full grown. It must begin where we are, with the agencies at our command. It must be directed with patience and saved by hope. It may be reassuring, however, to know that such a form of organization has been successfully developed elsewhere, and may, with proper modifications, be adapted to the conditions of our community. For this purpose the following Constitution and By-Laws have been adopted.

Constitution and By-Laws

Believing that friendly co-operation in religious and social welfare work tends to avoid duplication and unnecessary waste, that it helps to develop community life and a spirit of good fellowship, and that it makes possible a program of Christian activities so comprehensive as to be of vital importance to the kingdom of God, we, the undersigned, do hereby pledge our loyal support to the following constitution:

1. Name—This organization shall be known as the ———— Larger Parish.

2. Object—Its object shall be to promote the social, moral and religious welfare of the district by combining the various activities of.....

.....

.....churches, and such other churches, religious bodies and social welfare agencies as may be admitted from time to time, by vote of the Council.

3. Membership—All persons holding membership in the affiliated churches of the district may become members of this organization by signing the constitution. Others may be elected to membership by a majority vote of the Council, providing they are accustomed to spend at least two months of the year in residence in..... .....district, that they contribute annually to the support of the work, and sign the constitution

4. Council—The Council shall consist of representatives chosen as follows:

Two from each of the affiliated churches, each church voting separately for its own representatives.

Six from the elected membership of the Parish, to be chosen by a majority vote of the church representatives on the Council.

All staff-workers ex-officio, but with no power to vote on questions pertaining to their employment or salary.

Members of the Council shall hold office for two years except that in.....each church shall elect one representative to serve for only one year, and these shall choose three from the elected membership of the Parish to serve for only one year.

The Council shall be the executive body of the organization with power to engage the staff workers, appoint committees, raise and distribute funds, and provide for such activities as will most effectually carry out the purpose of the.....

.....Larger Parish.

It shall have as its officers, a chairman, who will act as the official head of the Larger Parish, and a secretary and treasurer, who shall act as secretary and treasurer of the Parish.

The Council shall hold monthly meetings, keep an accurate account of its proceedings, and shall present an annual statement to the Parish, giving a full report of each year's work.

5. Staff Workers—It shall be the aim of the Parish to maintain a multiple ministry consisting of two co-pastors and at least one social-service director. One pastor shall have charge primarily of the preaching and public worship; the other shall be chiefly responsible for the work of religious education through Sunday Schools, Bible classes and kindred agencies. The social director or directors shall develop the recreational side of the community life, arranging for entertainments, social gatherings and various kinds of outdoor and indoor activities.

6. Meetings—There shall be an annual meeting of the Larger Parish held on or near the first of August, at which time the Council shall make its report, plans for the ensuing year be discussed, and other business of a general character be transacted.

Immediately following this meeting the affiliated churches shall elect their representatives to the Council, and these in turn, and without delay, shall elect those who are to represent the parish at large. No business shall be transacted by the Council until its membership is completed and its officers elected.

7. Amendment—This constitution may be altered or amended at any meeting of the Council by a two-thirds vote of the members present, providing due notice in writing of the proposed alteration or amendment shall have been sent to each member not less than one month in advance.

The Rochester and Lakeville Larger Parish, Massachusetts

PREAMBLE:

Believing that friendly co-operation in religious and social welfare work helps to develop community life and a spirit of good fellowship, and that it makes possible a program of Christian activities so comprehensive as to be of vital importance to the Kingdom of God, we, the following organizations, namely:—

The East Rochester Congregational Church
The Grove Chapel Congregational Church
The North Rochester Congregational Church
The Lakeview and Taunton Precinct Congregational Church do hereby pledge our loyal support to the following:

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

1. *NAME.* This organization shall be known as *The Rochester and Lakeville Larger Parish.*

2. *OBJECT.* Its object shall be to promote the religious, moral and social welfare of the Larger Parish and for the advancement of God's Kingdom by correlating the various activities of the above mentioned Church, and such other Churches, religious bodies and social welfare agencies as may be admitted from time to time.

3. *COUNCIL.* There shall be a Larger Parish Council which shall be the executive body of the Larger Parish and made up of three delegates from each constituent member.

Its membership shall not be limited to Church members.

The staff workers shall be members of the Council, but with no voting power as to their status or salary.

MEETINGS. The Council shall hold regular monthly meetings, and special meetings at the call of the Chairman, or of five Council members. A majority shall constitute a quorum.

Each Council member shall serve three years, except the first councilors, one-third of whom shall serve for one year, and one-third for two years.

No Council member shall serve more than two successive terms without an interim of one year.

The Council shall elect a Chairman, who shall act as the official head of the Larger Parish, a Vice-Chairman, a Secretary, and a Treasurer.

The Treasurer shall furnish suitable bonds, if deemed advisable by the Council. The Council shall provide for the proper auditing of all accounts.

All these officers shall act in the same capacity as officers of the Larger Parish.

DUTIES. The Council shall employ a staff of workers, subject to the approval of the majority of the uniting Churches. The staff shall be responsible to the Council. The Council shall raise the Larger Parish budget, and attend to all matters affecting the Larger Parish.

4. *STAFF WORKERS.* It shall be the aim of the Parish to maintain a multiple ministry, consisting of two co-pastors and, if possible, one social service director. One pastor shall have charge primarily of the preaching and public worship, the other shall be chiefly responsible for the work of religious education, through Sunday Schools, Bible classes and kindred agencies. The social director or directors shall develop the recreational side of the community life, arranging for entertainments, social gatherings and various kinds of outdoor and indoor activities as the Council may direct.

5. *MEETINGS.* (a) The Secretary of the Council shall call an Annual Meeting of the Larger Parish, to be held on or near the first of April, at which time the

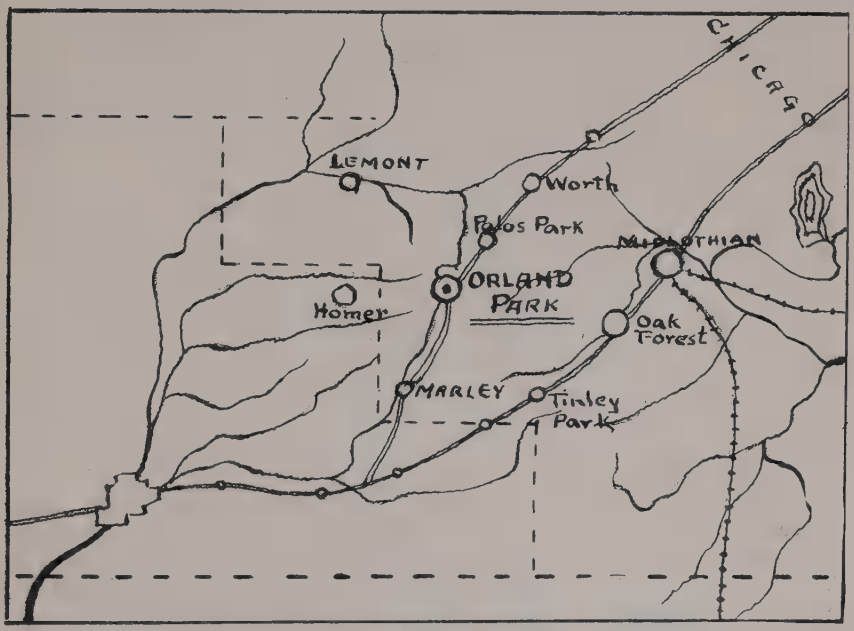
Council shall make its report, plans for the ensuing year discussed, and other business of a general character be transacted. (b) No business shall be transacted by the Council, until its membership is completed and its officers elected.

6. It is understood that the income of invested funds to be expended in the respective parishes for which the fund was given, shall be expended for the benefit of that parish and may be contributed to the support of the ministers of the Larger Parish for work done in that (local) parish.

7. *BUDGET.* Each Constituent Member of the Larger Parish be responsible for a certain definite amount as its quota, for the support of the Larger Parish, to be determined by the Council, and each Church shall pay to the Treasurer of the Larger Parish its designated quota.

8. *RELATION TO THE CONSTITUENT ORGANIZATIONS.* Each religious organization included in the Larger Parish shall maintain its independence in matters pertaining to its own internal affairs. It shall retain its own trust funds, its own buildings and may contribute to the benevolences of its own denomination, as its members desire. Each organization's connection with the Larger Parish shall be voluntary, and any constituent member may withdraw from the Parish at the time of the Annual Meeting, provided that notice of such intention has been given to the Council six months in advance.

9. *AMENDMENTS* to the Constitution may be proposed at any regular meeting of the Council. Notice of such proposal shall thereupon be given to the Constituent Members by the Secretary of the Council. Upon a two-thirds vote of the constituent members the amendment shall go into effect.



Chicago Southwest Suburban Community Parish—Illinois

II. THE PARISH PROGRAM

THE OXFORD COUNTY UNITED PARISH

which provides religious, social and educational advantages of the more abundant life over an area comprising three and more townships through the co-operation of the

Albany Congregational Church
East Stoneham Congregational Church
North Waterford Congregational Church
Waterford Federated Churches:
Waterford Congregational Church
Waterford Methodist Church
Waterford Universalist Church
United Parish Church of Christ in North Lovell

With the encouraging support and financial aid of the Methodist State Conference, Congregational Conference and Missionary Society of Maine, Universalist Convention of Maine; also of several interested and generous individual contributors under the direction of the

OXFORD COUNTY UNITED PARISH COUNCIL

Composed of delegates from churches, districts, and especially interested persons. With an Executive Staff of three ministers, with departments and assigned fields as follows:

MINISTER OF WORSHIP

Church services of worship
Services in school districts
"All the parish services"
Open air or special feature services
Special evangelistic services
Pastoral care and visitation
"Church Night:"
Inspiration and instruction
World Service:
Instruction with stereopticon
Financial support of missions

MINISTER OF EDUCATION

Better Sunday Schools:
Methods and material:
Equipment
Teacher training:
Conferences
Five night schools
Adult classes as home bureaus
Organized Classes:
Week day activities
Under class leadership
4-H Clubs
Transportation for pupils
Church Vacation Schools
Week day schools of religion
Young People's Organization:
Parish Young People's Council
Delegates to Summer Conferences
Community:
Improvement organizations, fire protecton, ploughed roads in winter.
Community Calendar, Health, Public Schools

MINISTER OF PARISH ACTIVITIES

Social and recreational
Circle suppers with special entertainment features
Moving pictures
Dramatics
Young People's Socials
The Crooked River Outing Club
Parish organized for outdoor activities
Winter carnivals:
Mid-winter feast of fun and fellowship
Field Day:
Mid-summer meets

Economic—Co-operation with Farm Bureau and other agencies
Study of local conditions looking to greater economic independence
Financial—Canvass seeking joint improved support
Health—Co-operation with State Department of Health—lectures and pictures.
Co-operation with Country Maternity Nurse
Baby clinics, Mothers' conferences, Dental clinics; Pre-school age
Co-operation with hospital through Committee of Federation of Churches
Flowers for the sick
Welfare and Relief—Distribution of clothing as needed
Free hospital treatment for needy cases

all looking toward

COMMUNITY CO-OPERATION FOR CHRISTIAN CHARACTER

III. THE PARISH SURVEY

THE Larger Parish Plan presupposes the survey method, which treats every community as needing separate diagnosis and an individually conceived and prescribed program. It considers the survey, and careful interpretation of the facts discovered by that survey, as absolutely essential. For a major objective must always be "to secure by systematic study a complete knowledge of conditions, problems, assets and liabilities of a definite area, so that progressive and effective programs may be constructed for solving problems discovered."

Some practical purposes of the survey have been enumerated as follows: To discover the area for which the church is responsible. To locate every family and individual within the area for which the minister and his church should be responsible. To learn from every family some of the most important facts such as age, name, connections, etc. To find what things present themselves in that group of families for which the church is responsible, and to which of them it can minister. To discover what interests exist to which the church can appeal and which it can use as a point of contact. To disclose talents and abilities latent in the community which can be utilized in the work of the church and in the development of community life. To discover interests as well as people to be won.

A noted minister puts it this way: "I must know my community better. I must know it better than any one else knows it. Perhaps the things I know best how to do are not the things that the community needs most to have done. If it be so, I want to find it out myself. I want to know how to get in touch with the forces I should work with. I want to discover problems, and with them the resources with which they may be solved."

The effects of the survey method upon a minister and his people are subtle, and are unappreciated by many who do not wish to take the trouble or pains to be really scientific in their parish work. These have been well described by C. J. Galpin in his incomparable book—*Rural Life.*

"*The survey discloses a constantly new parish.* It is a rare rural pastor who can by unaided casual means and methods of parish acquaintance escape the point of diminishing interest in his parish and congregation. A growing staleness, after the first flush of newness wears off the parish, begins to creep over the casual rural pastor. He is open to doubts about the efficiency of his own work, to suspicions about a cleavage in the parish; he is open, then, to allurements vaguely drifting to him from other parishes, illusions about a permanent freshness in a new field of labor, ambitions as to increased salary and opportunity. The inevitable monotony of a static view of the parish weakens the grip of the rural pastor. To meet this situation the

method of constantly studying a parish affords an undoubted antidote. *Every year the parish becomes a new parish to the observing, measuring, probing, recording rural pastor."*

"The survey creates a constantly new pastor. If the parish is liable to become an old story to the casual rural pastor, much more, perhaps, is it true that the casual pastor is liable to become an old story to his rural parish. Unless he is a close student of his own parish, the time soon comes when the parish knows beforehand and can predict his attitudes and utterances. The rural pastor who is carefully studying his parish year by year in a systematic way becomes a new man as he discovers a new parish. *The fresh point of view, the vital use of essential facts, the dynamic themes, continue to weld pastor and people together."*

TOWN Smithville, N.Y.

CARD NO. 37

RELIGIOUS CENSUS

TEL. EXCHANGE Sugar River ROAD North NO ON MAP 50

HOUSE Frame CONDITION Excellent OUT BUILDINGS Good MARKET CENTRE Smithville

COLOR White NATIONALITY American OWNERS Yes NEAREST CHURCH Smithville SCHOOL Smithville

NAMES	SEX	AGE	OCCUPATION	REL PREF	MEMBER	ATTENDANT	SUN. SCHOOL
Mr. George Smith	M	64	Farmer	M.E.	No	Yes	No
Mrs. George Smith	F	61	At Home	M.E.	No	Yes	No
Mr. Lenard Smith	M	38	Baker	M.E.	No	Yes	No
Mrs. Lenard Smith	F	35	At Home	M.E.	No	Yes	Yes
Miss Hazel Smith	F	21	At Home	M.E.	No	Yes	Yes
Miss Gladys Smith	F	5	At Home	M.E.	No	Yes	Yes

PARISH Smithville PASTORAL CARE O.R. Jones

REMARKS: (ATTITUDE TOWARDS ORGANIZED RELIGION AND VISITOR S GENERAL IMPRESSION.)

Great interest is shown toward organized religion. In fact, these are my most loyal and generous supporters outside the church members

O.R. Jones VISITOR

The word "survey" is somewhat in disfavor, and other words are used to express the same purpose and idea, e. g., diagnosis, analysis, audit, and study. Some persons refer to the process as fact-finding, getting acquainted, and knowing the community. There are also several different kinds of surveys; viz., county, community, household, church, and special interest surveys. A parish survey will cover an area included in the trade-zone, since as far out as the business man goes after business so far out the church owes pastoral care and religious privilege. The Larger Parish survey will be made by all of the co-operating churches acting together, and with the people rather than for them. Data will be sought for use and not

merely for information, with a knowledge acquired beforehand of how to get, interpret, chart, and use the desired information. Facts must be visualized, so as to reveal Larger Parish needs and opportunities to all concerned.

A sample of a Religious Census Card to be filed in the minister's card index, and a Household Study sheet, are given by way of suggestion. These can be secured of such organizations as the Home Missions Council, or the Institute of Social and Religious Research. The different denominations also furnish them. Many ministers prefer to make their own schedules.

HOUSEHOLD STUDY — **No. on Parish Map**

Community — P. O. Address — Phone

Father's full name

Mother's maiden name

Live in village or open country? — Owner — Renter

Distance from church — How long lived there? — Where lived last time?

1.	First name of each member of the family									
2.	Relationship									
3.	Birth: Date									
	Place									
	Country									
	Race									
4.	Citizen of U. S.?									
5.	Education: Year or grade completed?									
	Now a student? Where?									
6.	Occupation									
	Do you work in this community?									
7	If temporarily away from home, where?									
8.	Baptized?									
9.	Member of what church?									
10.	Church preference, if not member?									
11	Why not church member or why no preference?									
12.	Attend church? If not, why not?									

Page Two

13.	Given name									
14	Member of what S. S.?									
	If not, why not?									
15.	Member of what church organizations?									
16.	Active in what church work?									
17	Member of other organizations Religious									
	Business									
	Social									
	Recreational									
18	Favorite Recreation									
19	Music: Do you sing?									
	Play what instrument?									

20. Name Papers in Home.
    Religious
    Secular
    Children
21 Why do you live in this Community?

22. Suggestions for Community—

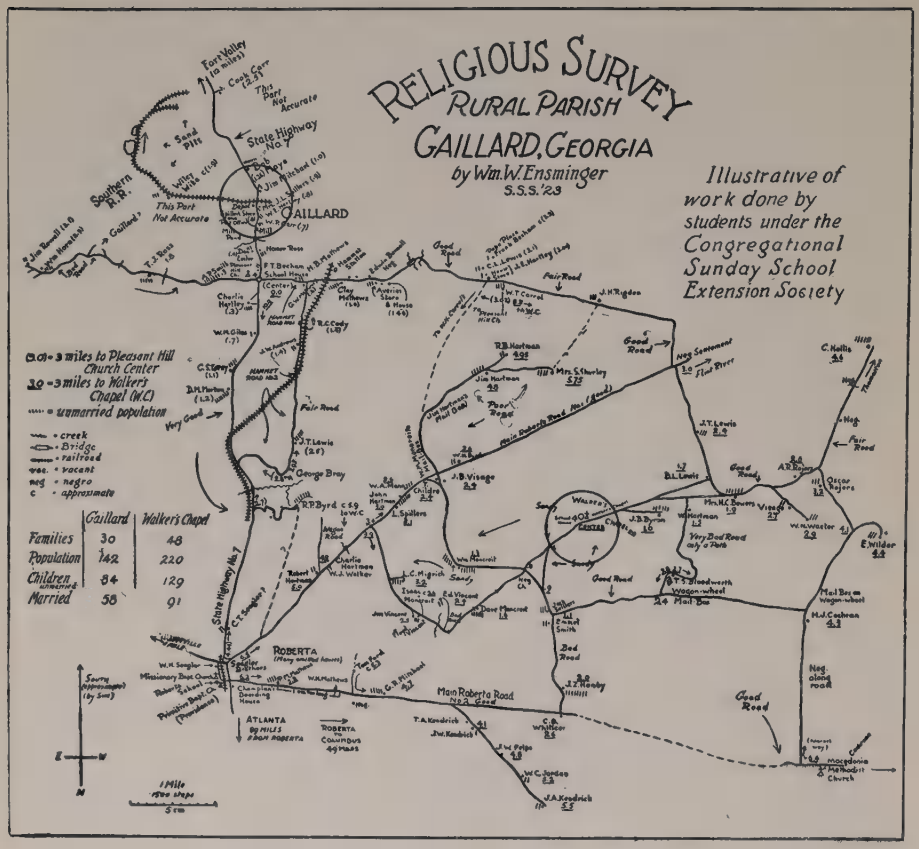
23 Suggestions for Church—

24 Miscellaneous and Remarks:—

Date of Survey

IV. THE PARISH MAP

SOME of the findings of a Survey will fail of their usefulness unless they are visualized by means of a carefully drawn Parish Map. Considerable ingenuity can be exercised in inventing signs and symbols by which important facts will appear. Every home within the Larger Parish area will be spotted on the map. Each one will have a number corresponding to the family card in the minister's card index, and to the household survey sheet in his filing cabinet. These will contain an accurate list of church members, contributors, and "prospects," as well as intimate data secured in pastoral visitations and in the original survey, kept always up to date. This is routine. But every conscientious minister should make such a parish map and place it where his church people will see it. This will remind them of the extent of the parish and their obligations in the matter of country and farmstead visitation.

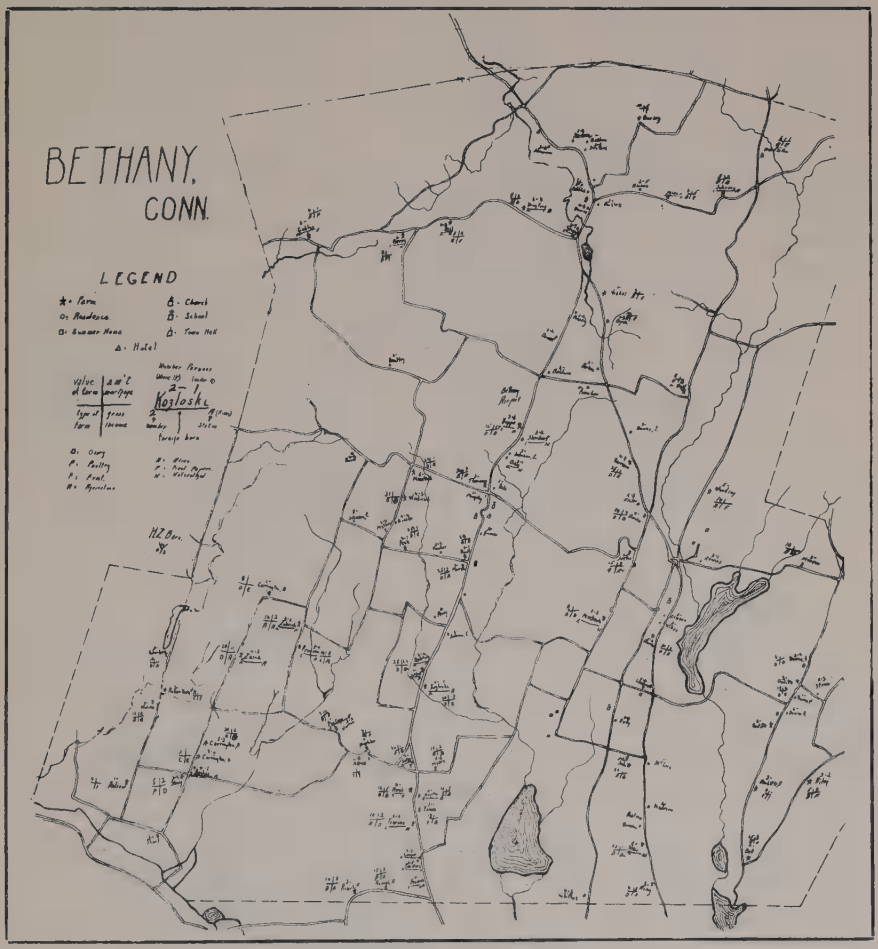


A Parish Map—Georgia

He should leave the map behind him as a most valuable legacy to his successor when he leaves for another pastorate.

Here is the comment of a noted sociologist upon the virtues and rewards of parish map making.

"Whatever the type of parish—whether open-country, hamlet, village or small city—an accurate map, large, made to scale, containing every farm home spotted, every highway, should be in the pastor's study. The map pictures the pastor's work shop. His study-room is only an office. His library, his church building, his parsonage, his social building, are his appliances. But his field, his parish, where the human plants are growing, is his farm. Drawing with the instruments of a draftsman, skilfully and attractively, will become an accomplishment. The pastor once having got the idea of visualizing his parish on paper will find himself studying the significant relationships of



A Parish Map—Connecticut

his parishioners to their representation on his parish map. No human relationships are outside his idealisms. The real and the actual, the ideal and religious, are closely co-ordinated in his thought."

Map outlines can be traced from a Town and City Atlas to be found in any court house or real estate office. Enlargements can be easily made from Rural Route Maps, or from Tourist Road Maps. It would be much better if ministers made their own parish maps, as a college and seminary student did the one on a previous page.

V. THE PAR STANDARD

TWO BOOKS, "Tested Methods" and "Churches of Distinction," published by the Institute of Social and Religious Research, give a Par Standard Program for the Town and Country Church based upon the forty "going concerns" described therein. Other Par Standards or Goals have been devised. Two appear on these pages, the one for the Rural Church, and the other for its Church School.

These charts present minimum requirements, quite within reach of churches and church-schools of modest size, equipment and leadership.

They are composites of actual attainment. No one church or church-school has reached one hundred per cent. efficiency as measured by these standards, but nothing appears on the charts which has not been attained by some church or church-school somewhere.

Rural pastors and their churches will advantage by using Par Standards or Goals, for both visualize an orderly system, adequate equipment, and efficient technic. They embody plans and programs inspired by real study of community needs and possibilities. Many churches are inert and lifeless because they possess no objectives dominated by "the long term view." Many a minister is dubbed lazy, or actually becomes so, because he has no program. Aimlessness can easily be taken for something worse, and the minister who makes no plans, fixes no goals, and aims nowhere, generally arrives—nowhere. And there is no more tragic sight than that of colossal piety rendered inefficient and ineffective through apparent inability to formulate and use well devised programs of work.

The Par Standard can prove an ally to both minister and church as a silent preachment. Such a chart will permit the eye-gate to re-enforce the ear-gate. Hanging in some conspicuous place, its unchecked items or unworthy percentages will be a continual gospel of the yet unattained. The appeal will be to minister and people alike. Par Standards can be introduced in an interesting and useful manner. Each section on the chart might be made the subject for discussion at successive church-night meetings, or by some other group. No better consideration of what should constitute an effective town and country church and church-school program could be devised. The Par Standards should be formally adopted as goals of effort.

A Proposed Goal for the Rural Church

Prepared for experimental use by the Department of Country Life and Leadership Training of the Reformed Church in the U. S. To be used in conjunction with the Proposed Goal for the Church School, published by the International Council of Religious Education.

		Possible Score	Your Church Score		
			First Scoring	Second Scoring	Third Scoring
	I. PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT				
1.	Comfortable and attractive parsonage with modern conveniences	2			
2.	Auditorium seating maximum attendance at regular services	2			
3.	Organ or piano	2			
4.	Adequate and convenient parking space	2			
5.	Lighting adequate for evening use of building	2			
	II. ORGANIZATION				
6.	Separately organized men's and women's groups	2			
7.	Organized church Board	2			
8.	Activities of all classes and organizations related to church program	4			
	III. THE PASTOR				
9.	Resident pastor giving full time to Christian ministry	2			
10.	Pastor with college and seminary training	2			
11.	Minimum salary $1800 and free use of parsonage	3			
12.	Church assisting pastor toward membership in annuity fund	2			
13.	Church assisting pastor toward training for rural ministry	3			
	IV. PROGRAM				
14.	At least one worship service each Sunday	2			
15.	Religious census of the parish	3			
16.	Parish map	3			
17.	Social survey of the parish	3			
18.	Standard goals for church and church school	3			
19.	Annual program of church and community	4			
20.	Opportunity for training in fine arts	3			
21.	Effort to develop appreciation of spiritual content of nature	2			
22.	Develop understanding, appreciation and support of denominational agencies	3			
23.	Program of church publicity	2			
	V. FINANCE				
24.	Annual church budget including benevolences and local expenses	3			
25.	Every Member Canvass annually	2			
26.	All current bills paid monthly	2			
27.	Properties adequately insured	2			
	VI. MISSIONARY ACTIVITY				
28.	Missions presented from pulpit and through curriculum of church school	2			
29.	Social welfare work in community	3			
30.	Regular visitation of homes	3			
31.	Constant evangelistic effort	3			
32.	Participation in specific missionary projects	3			
	VII. LEADERSHIP				
33.	20% of congregation assuming some definite responsibility in program	3			
34.	Officers and leaders faithful to their tasks	3			
35.	Regular workers' Conference. Supervision of workers	4			
36.	Church officers and leaders reading one church paper, and one book annually	3			
37.	Effort to discover, develop and utilize new leaders and workers	3			
38.	Discussion groups of adults and parents	4			
39.	Standard leadership training credits earned each year by officers and leaders	4			
40.	One full time Christian life service recruit in last ten years	2			
	VIII. CO-OPERATION				
41.	Active local ministers' association or interdenominational council	3			
42.	Annual community training school	3			
43.	Annual community school of religious education	2			
44.	Co-operation with interdenominational organizations	2			
45.	Co-operation with local clubs and social organizations	3			
	Total	120			

A Proposed Goal for the Church School

The points are necessarily stated in briefest possible form on this chart. A complete interpretation, and full directions for scoring, will be found in the pamphlet *A Proposed Goal for the Church School.* Scoring is to be done only on the basis of those directions.

		Possible Score	Your School Score		
			First Scoring	Second Scoring	Third Scoring
	I. TIME				
1.	Church school held the entire year	2			
2.	Length of session at least 60 minutes	2			
3.	School run on schedule time	2			
4.	At least 15 minutes devoted to worship	2			
5.	At least 30 minutes devoted to class session	2			
	II. PLACE				
6.	The building prepared for each session	2			
7.	Proper care to light, heat and ventilation	2			
8.	Available space used to best advantage	2			
9.	The building and grounds made attractive	2			
10.	Seats to fit the pupils	2			
11.	Classes in separate rooms, or otherwise properly separated	3			
	III. ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION				
12.	The school under direction of a committee on religious education	3			
13.	A complete corps of officers and teachers	3			
14.	Pupils properly grouped	3			
15.	Separate worship services for at least the pupils under nine	3			
16.	Regular promotion	2			
	IV. RECORDS AND REPORTS				
17.	A system of records regularly kept	3			
18.	The record regularly kept up to date	2			
19.	Reports regularly made	2			
	V. WORKING MATERIALS				
20.	Suitable church school hymn books	2			
21.	A sufficient quantity of graded materials for each pupil and teacher	4			
22.	Adequate equipment	3			
23.	An annual budget of at least one dollar per pupil	3			
	VI. LEADERSHIP				
24.	Each teacher faithful to his work and properly prepared for each Sunday	3			
25.	Regular workers' conference with an educational program	3			
26.	Teachers and officers reading regularly on religious education	3			
27.	Standard teacher training credits earned by teachers and officers	4			
	VII. QUALITY OF WORK				
28.	An average attendance of 70% or more of the enrolment	3			
29.	At least 85% of attendance on time each Sunday	2			
30.	Worship services regularly planned in advance, and properly adapted	2			
31.	Pupils participating reverently and wholeheartedly in worship	2			
32.	General good order throughout the session of the school	3			
33.	Wholesome interest in and purposeful approach to the work	2			
34.	Decision for the Christian life and active church membership	4			
35.	Regular and systematic giving	2			
36.	Active participation in service activities	2			
37.	Adequate social and recreational program	2			
	VIII. HOME RELATIONSHIPS				
38.	An active cradle roll	2			
39.	A working home department	2			
40.	Each home visited at least once a year by teachers	3			
	Total score	100			

SOME NOTABLE LARGER PARISHES

This list contains only *some* of the notable Larger Parishes. Other equally effective ones are doubtless omitted. Those mentioned below are cited by denominational representatives as worthy of place, and any persons who wish direct information about the Larger Parish Plan actually at work can write to the various ministers whose names are given. These Larger Parishes are of different type. Some minister to churches of the same denomination and others are interdenominational in support and work. In all cases, however, the purpose is to give religious privilege to "all people living upon an inhabited area of land." Parishes starred are illustrated in the text.

INTERDENOMINATIONAL

*Mt. Desert Larger Parish	Rev. Arthur Wilson, Seal Harbor, Me.
Southwest Harbor-Tremont Larger Parish	Rev. Perry L. Smith, S. W. Harbor, Me.
Presumpscott Union Parish	Rev. Clarence Clark, N. Windham, Me.
*Trego Larger Parish	Rev. P. D. Powe, Trego, Wis.
Standish-Sebago Lake Regional Parish	Rev. Louis C. Harnish, Standish, Me.
*El Dorado County Federated Church	Rev. Charles W. Null, Placerville, Cal.
*Chicago S. W. Suburban Community Parish	Rev. Paul Sanders, Orland Park, Ill.
*Plateau Valley Larger Parish	Rev. Chester Mardis, Collbran, Colo.
*Oxford County United Parish	Rev. Wilbur Bull, N. Waterford, Me.

BAPTIST

*St. Joseph Larger Parish	Rev. R. W. Leisher, Three Rivers, Mich.

CONGREGATIONAL

*Sandhill Larger Parish	Rev. Ernest G. Larsen, Bingham, Neb.
*Moffatt County Church	Rev. James H. Bridges, Craig, Colo.
*West Florida Associated Parishes	Rev. J. H. Tillman, Crestview, Fla.
Lower Pend Oreille Larger Parish	Rev. H. S. Wanamaker, Cusick, Wash.
Richmond County Congregational Fellowship	Rev. Harry Trust, Mansfield, Ohio
The Rochester-Lakeville Larger Parish	Rev. Everett T. Bement
Hickory County Christian Churches	Rev. R. H. Hoffman, Wheatland, Mo.
Lake of the Woods Larger Parish	Rev. F. C. Schmidt, Roosevelt, Minn.
*Aroostook Larger Parish	Rev. Earl Clifford, Ashland, Me.
Coalwood Larger Parish	Rev. John Duncan, Coalwood, Mont.
Powder River Larger Parish	Rev. Max Webster, Broadus, Mont.

EPISCOPAL

Allegany Associate Mission	Rev. S. W. Kale, Wellsville, N. Y.
Wyoming-Genesee County Mission	Rev. C. R. Allison, Warsaw, N. Y.
*Western Counties Mission	Rev. Edwin Ford, Belmont, N. Y.

METHODIST

Boyne City Larger Parish	Rev. H. W. Helrigel, Boyne City, Mich.
Ann Arbor District Larger Parishes	Rev. John E. Martin, Ann Arbor, Mich.
Cleveland Larger Parish	Rev. W. L. Oliver, Cleveland, Tenn.
Colebrook Larger Parish	Rev. R. S. Barker, Colebrook, N. H.
Rochester Larger Parish	Rev. N. C. Webster, Montgomery, Vt.
Susquehanna Valley Larger Parish	Rev. H. E. Brooks, Afton, N. Y.
La Salle Larger Parish	Rev. R. M. Furnish, Earlville, N. Y.
Sheridan Larger Parish	Rev. R. H. Laury, Big Horn, Wyo.
Crawford County Larger Parish	Rev. Fred Sutton, Fort Scott, Kan.
Kendall County Larger Parish	Rev. O. L. Jones, Plano, Ill.
Racine Larger Parish	Rev. Ernest Kistler, Union Grove, Wis.
B. F. Tobey, Larger Parish	Rev Ralph Williamson, R. F. D. 8, Ithaca, N. Y.

PRESBYTERIAN

Temples Hills Parish	Rev. Carl H. Elliot, Oak Hall, Ohio
Weldon Valley Larger Parish	Rev. J. T. Alam, Goodrich, Colo.
Lost River Larger Parish	Rev. Stanley H. Jewell, Merrill, Ore.
Bollinger County Larger Parish	Rev. W. M. Griffin, Patton, Mo.
Orcas Island Larger Parish	Rev. F. S. Eastman, East Sound, Wash.
*Goshen Hole Larger Parish	Rev. Harry E. Bicksler, Lingle, Wyo.
*Berryville Larger Parish	Rev. B. N. Weaver, Berryville, Ark.

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Those persons interested in problems of visualization can get information concerning the Homelite Generator and Acme Stereopticon and Moving Picture Projector from the Homelite Corporation, Port Chester, N. Y., and the Acme Division of the International Projector Corporation, 90 Gold Street, N. Y. Mr. F. F. Moore, of the Congregational Church Extension Boards, 287 Fourth Ave., N. Y., will be glad to furnish data regarding these machines, and also the Victor Anamatagraph stereopticon, (Victor Anamatagraph Company, Davenport, Iowa), to Congregational ministers. In some cases special discounts can be arranged.

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